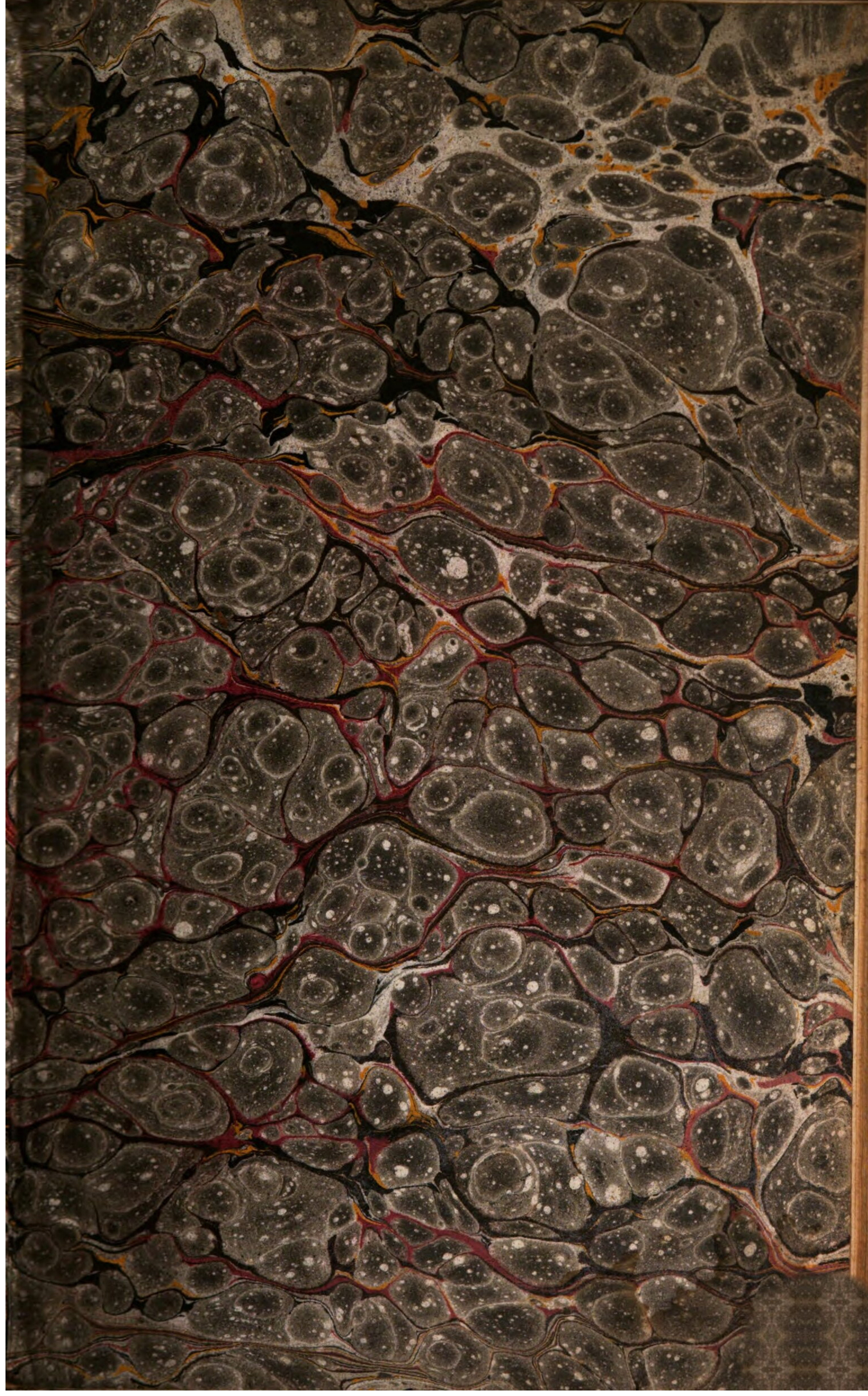














Gall. rev. 88.











ANNALS  
OF THE  
FRENCH REVOLUTION;

OR,  
A CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF  
*Its Principal Events;*

WITH A VARIETY OF  
ANECDOTES AND CHARACTERS  
HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED.

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BY  
A. F. BERTRAND DE MOLEVILLE,  
MINISTER OF STATE.

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TRANSLATED  
By R. C. DALLAS, Esq.

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF THE AUTHOR, WHICH HAS  
NEVER BEEN PUBLISHED.

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.  
VOL. IV.

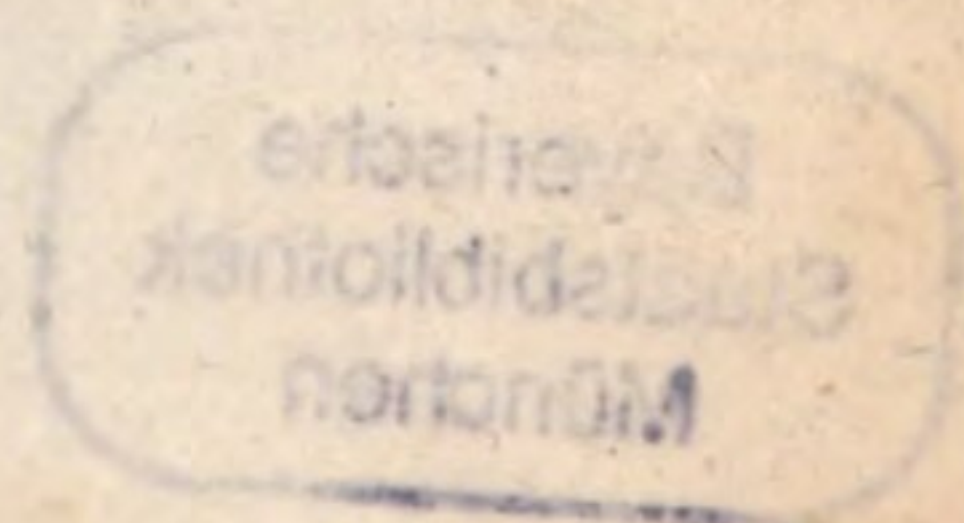
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1800.





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**MIRABEAU**, at the time of his death, had risen to a degree of consideration and popularity



popularity which his rivals and antagonists could not injure, nor yet attain for themselves. He had already made numerous conquests in the *Coté-Droit*, without losing much in the *Coté-Gauche*. A member of the Department, Commander of a battalion of the National Guard, and powerfully aided out of the funds of the Civil List, he united all the means of influence and of credit which he needed, to combat, with immense advantage, the Factious, whom he wished to overturn; and he was going to begin his attack, when he was himself seized with the disorder which carried him to his grave. His death at this period was the most fatal event for the King. All the hopes his Majesty had grounded on the execution of *Mirabeau's* plan, died with him. There was no man left in any party fit to conduct such an enterprise with the least probability of success. It was therefore necessary to renounce it, and to think of other means of safety.

The King's residence in the Capital became daily more hateful to him, on account of the scandalous and violent scenes which passed before his eyes, and which he had no power to repress. The execution of the



civil constitution of the Clergy was the pretext for them. The populace, who had assumed the supreme executive power, in that business, exercised it with as much indecency as brutality. The faithful priests, now described by the term *refractory*, were every where pursued and insulted. Mobs, carrying rods, forced open the doors of the convents in service time, and with a ferocious pleasure whipped, not only the nuns but also all the women who went to those chapels from the pious desire of uniting their prayers with those of a priest who had not taken the new oath.

*M. de Lessart*, the Minister of the Interior, wrote a very energetic letter on this occasion to the Directory of the Department. "If this licentiousness," said he, "be not  
"repressed; if at every event, at every circumstance; if in the Capital, under the  
"eyes of the King and of the National  
"Assembly, such excesses are to be repeated, there will in fact be neither liberty  
"nor security, and the Constitution will  
"never be established. It is, therefore, in  
"the name of the Constitution itself, in  
"the name of order, and for the honour of  
"the Government, that the King enjoins  
"you



“ you to employ the promptest and the  
“ surest means to cause the authors of these  
“ crimes to be prosecuted and punished.”

Instead of executing an order so reasonable, the Directory of the Department, improving upon the civil Constitution of the Clergy, entered into a resolution, by which they ordered, that only the parish churches should be open to the public ; that in each of them should be a lay-overseer, charged with the care and order of the church, vestry, &c. &c. and whose particular duty it should be to prevent any ecclesiastical functions from being exercised in the said churches by any other than the public ecclesiastical functionaries paid by the Nation, appointed to each of the said churches, and whose names should be inscribed upon a table, placed for that purpose at the door of the vestry ; or other priests provided with a licence from the Bishop, examined and allowed by the Clergyman of the parish, and renewed every three months\*. It was ordered

\* This arrangement was not modified till the 7th of May following, when the Decree passed, which declares, that the not taking the oath prescribed by the



dered by the same decision, that all the other churches and chapels in Paris should be shut in twenty-four hours, except the chapels of the charity-houses and prisons, colleges, seminaries, and convents of nuns, cloistered and not suppressed, which chapels should be only for the private use of the said houses, without being in any case open to the public, and the duty of which should be performed only by ecclesiastics, who should obtain for the purpose a particular authority from the Bishop of *Paris*, examined by the parish minister.

The Municipality, in their Proclamation, contented themselves with forbidding all citizens from riotously assembling before the houses and churches of religious communities, and from committing any excesses against any person whatsoever, threatening to denounce to the tribunals whoever should be taken in a mob, or in the act of making a riot. But these menaces not being accompanied by any process against such as had al-

Decree of the 28th of March, should not be objected against any ecclesiastic presenting himself to say mass in any parochial church, chapel of ease, or National private chapel.

ready



ready been guilty of those crimes, the populace only laughed at them, and renewed those atrocious scenes, the suffering which to go unpunished, proved but too clearly that it was much less the liberty of divine worship than its destruction that was aimed at, through the annihilation of the Catholic worship.

The Assembly, occupied with the new organization of the ministry, and the barefaced denunciation of *Bonjour* the clerk, against *M. de Fleurieu*, the Minister of Marine, seemed to pay no attention to these anti-religious commotions. They accorded but too well with their views for them to order any prosecution tending to stop their course. They might besides be afraid of exposing the conduct of those among their members who had been the principal instigators of these crimes, which were often directed against the King himself, in respect to his Chapel, an attempt being made to compel him to suffer the service to be performed by Constitutional priests. This counsel, or rather this order, was given to him with a shameless insolence, sometimes by the journalists, sometimes by the vociferators among the groups assembled under



the windows of the Palace. *M. de la Fayette*, at this period, meeting *M. de la Porte*, Intendant of the Civil List, in the King's Cabinet, asked him if his Majesty was employed in the new arrangement of his Household. "For," said he, smiling, "the King has about him only those ecclesiastics who are in our eyes schismatics. Tell me," continued he in the same tone, "Does the King's conscience lie in the Department of the Council or in that of the Civil List? I ask, because the news is, that he is about to change his confessor\*.

All these indignities only served to confirm the King in his design of going to Montmedi, and his last letters to *M. de Bouillé* fixed the time for the end of April or beginning of May. *M. de Montmorin* not having been made acquainted with this plan, had thought of another, much more wisely combined in all its parts, and which, without hazarding the dignity of the King, or the safety of his person, by the incon-

\* *M. de la Porte's* letter to the King, dated the 19th of March 1791, found in the iron press, and reported in the third collection of those papers, No. lxxxiv.



venience and dangers of a clandestine flight, presented a certain prospect of the most gentle and advantageous Counter-Revolution that could reasonably be desired. The plan was this :

*M. de Montmorin*, who secretly kept up a daily correspondence with the Count *de Mercy*, was to commission him, on the part of the King, to invite the Emperor to form, as soon as possible, a feigned coalition with the Empire, Prussia, Russia, Spain, and the Kings of Naples and Sardinia, to declare, but not make actual war against France.

This coalition once formed were to publish a manifesto, the chief grounds of which, pointed out in the plan, should be the maintenance of the rights of the Princes who had possessions in France, and the common interest of all the Powers, to stop a Revolution, the principles and manœuvres of which tended to nothing less than the subversion of all the Governments of Europe.

At the precise period in which this manifesto was to be published, the Emperor, the Kings of Prussia, Spain, and Sardinia, were each to put his army in motion, and order it to approach the frontiers of France, by short



short marches, under pretence of waiting the assembling the troops of the other Powers, but, in fact, to give the King time to prepare the different measures in the interior, which were to concur in the success of the plan.

These measures consisted essentially in neglecting nothing to augment the King's popularity, and to undermine that of all the Factious; to endeavour, by every possible means, to influence the Assembly and the Galleries, the Municipality and the Sections, the Jacobin Club and the National Guard, and to support and carry the motions that circumstances should require. A sum of two millions, distributed with judgment, would have been sufficient to secure these points; for, except a very few fanatics, misled by the Revolutionary rage to a degree of madness, there were hardly any of these pretended pure patriots, who were not to be bought at their full value, that is to say, at a very low price.

The declaration of so formidable a preparation for war, at a moment when the French army, deprived by emigration of its best officers, was entirely disorganized, must naturally excite a general sentiment of discontent



tent and terror, which it would be easy to turn entirely against the Assembly. The King alone, exempt from all reproach, worthy of all confidence, might, by means of negotiation, avert the scourge of war with which France should seem threatened, or at least place the country in a situation to repulse the enemy ; and this he might effect by going in person to re-establish subordination in the army, there calling upon all the Emigrant Officers to return to him. This wish was to be addressed to his Majesty, not only by a great many Departments, by the Journalists, the Clubs, the groups of the *Palais-Royal*, but also by the Army itself ; and their petition being supported in the Assembly by all the members of the *Coté-Droit*, by a considerable party of the *Coté-Gauche*, and by the galleries, could not fail of being favourably received and granted. The King might then have set out without any obstacle for Metz or Valenciennes, according to the position of the hostile armies. On his arrival, his Majesty was to have published a proclamation, enjoining all the Emigrants immediately to return into the Kingdom, and commanding the Princes



Princes, Officers, and all Gentlemen, able to bear arms, personally to attend the King in the town to be appointed, in order to join with his Majesty in the defence of the State, the whole, under pain of being deemed traitors to their King and Country, and of being prosecuted as such. That these orders might be executed without delay, the Count *d'Artois* was to be informed of the King's plan before-hand, by a confidential person, to be fixed upon by *M. de Montmorin*.

After these first operations, a new Council was to be formed, and composed of Ministers chosen among persons most distinguished for their knowledge, energy, and monarchical principles. The King, attended by the Marquis *de Bouillé*, was to review his army, shew himself every day to the soldiers, and inspire their former loyalty, by often speaking to them kindly and confidently. At the same time, his Majesty was to negotiate with the Emperor, obtain an armistice, summon the Assembly to Metz or Valenciennes, to consult with them upon the demands of the Powers, and concert the conditions of peace.

The



The Queen remaining at Paris, was to render herself popular by letters to the Emperor and to the King of Naples, in order to separate them from the coalition, and they were to be written in a manner to produce the most beneficial effect. *M. de Montmorin* was also to remain at Paris, to treat with the principal members of the Assembly, to preserve the means of influence, and to direct them as occasion might require.

It was not to be presumed that the Assembly, when summoned by the King, would refuse to attend his person; the populace, in that case, would have compelled them to go; and thousands of addresses would have poured in from all parts to demand their dissolution. Previous to their arrival, or to their being superseded by new Deputies, appointed in the same manner as the former ones, that is to say, by the Bailiwick Assemblies, which the King might have convoked for that purpose, in compliance with the numerous petitions that might have been obtained from all the Provinces, his Majesty's Council, and that of the Emperor, might have concerted the conditions upon which the Powers were to insist.

These



These conditions, amongst which was to be the disarming and disbanding of the National Guard, were to be of such a nature that the King could not subscribe to them without the consent of the Assembly, nor the Assembly without consulting the wishes of their Constituents, that is to say, the Bailiwick Assemblies; the convocation of which, loudly demanded by the people, by the army, and by innumerable petitions, would become inevitable.

These Assemblies, contrived to be convoked on the same day throughout the Kingdom, were to be consulted not only respecting the demands of the different Powers, but respecting the plan of a declaration drawn up according to the desires contained in the majority of the instructions to the Deputies, and which was no more than a summary of the ancient Monarchical Government, cleared from all its abuses, and improved on principles the most prudent and the most proper to secure the stability of the French Constitution.

This declaration, fulfilling all wishes and realizing all hopes, except those of the factious and brigands, could not fail to be every where



where received with the most unanimous transports of joy. The Bailiwick Assemblies were to direct their Representatives to present the King with the homage of the general gratitude; and vote immediately the taxes necessary for the wants of the State, according to his Majesty's desire.

Thus would there have been an end to the Assembly, the Revolution, civil commotions, and war with the Powers of Europe. The King, after having settled the conditions of peace with them, was to set off for the Capital; there would he arrive in the midst of universal acclamations of joy, love, and happiness, and find, at last, *his good city of Paris*, those good Frenchmen of old times, that good People who idolized their Kings.

The King was at first charmed with this plan, and adopted it the more readily as he regarded it as the completion of that which he had already formed, and which he still concealed from *M. de Montmorin*.

The chief difference between the two plans was, respecting the King's departure from Paris. His Majesty in every respect preferred the measures proposed by *M. de Montmorin*; but they might not succeed:  
in



in which case those, the execution of which was confided to *M. de Bouillé*, might be attempted with more success. It was doubtless from this motive that the King did not entirely relinquish his plan of departure for Montmedi, and only informed *M. de Bouillé* that the execution of it was delayed; but that he should have timely notice of the day on which it should take place.

*M. de Montmorin* was authoris'd then to commission the Count *de Mercy*, on the part of the King, to press the Emperor to enter upon the negotiation I have mentioned with the other Powers, and to accelerate their coalition as much as possible; promising that the extraordinary expences attending it should be reimburs'd by the King.

Although *M. de Montmorin* had given but a general idea of the plan in his first letter to *M. de Mercy*, he said enough to convince him of the happy effects which might be hoped from it, and in consequence the Emperor immediately sent the most satisfactory answer. He said that he would without delay enter upon the negotiation propos'd to him, and in fact he did not lose a moment.



It only remained to send intelligence to the Princes of what was passing, that they might have time to prepare the Emigrants to obey the King's proclamation as soon as it should be published. A message of so delicate a nature could only be delivered verbally; and none but a very intelligent man, whose zeal and fidelity could stand every test, could be trusted with it. *M. de Montmorin* fixed upon the *Baron de Gilliers*, a brave man, most sincerely devoted to the Royal Family, and whom *Madame Elizabeth* particularly honoured with her confidence. The King approved the choice, and authorised *M. de Montmorin* to inform the *Baron de Gilliers* of all the particulars of the plan in question, that he might give an accurate statement of it to the *Count d'Artois*.

*M. de Montmorin* had several conferences on the subject with the *Baron de Gilliers* during Passion Week, (from the 10th to the 17th of April), and told him to prepare for his departure, as he might every moment expect an order for that purpose.

At this period too the doubts of a timorous and religious conscience increased the embarrassments inseparable from the critical situation of the King. He was more anxious



than ever to perform his Easter devotions; but he considered himself as having been guilty of a criminal weakness in assenting to the civil constitution of the Clergy. He thought himself in some degree answerable for the numberless scandals and iniquities resulting from it. He was firmly resolved to make reparation as soon as it was in his power; but he feared that this resolution was not sufficient to render him worthy of fulfilling the Paschal duty. He submitted with candour all his scruples in this respect to the Bishop of *Clermont*, in a letter too edifying to be suppressed.

“ I address you, reverend Father, with  
“ confidence as one of the Clergy who has  
“ constantly shown the most enlightened  
“ zeal for Religion. It is to consult you  
“ respecting the Easter devotions: can I,  
“ and ought I to perform them? You are  
“ acquainted with the wretched situation in  
“ which I am, on account of assenting to the  
“ decrees respecting the Clergy. I have  
“ always regarded it as a forced act, having  
“ never hesitated, as far as it respects my-  
“ self, to remain always united to the Catho-  
“ lic pastors, and being firmly resolved,  
“ should

1



“ should I ever recover my power, fully to  
 “ re-establish the Catholic worship. I have  
 “ seen a priest, who thinks that these senti-  
 “ ments may suffice, and that I may per-  
 “ form my Easter devotions ; but it is more  
 “ your province to say what the Church in  
 “ general thinks of it, and to appreciate  
 “ the circumstances in which we are placed.  
 “ If on the one hand it would not give of-  
 “ fence to some, on the other I see the in-  
 “ novators (though indeed that should bear  
 “ no weight in the scale) already daring to  
 “ speak in threatening language. I request  
 “ you to advise on the subject with such  
 “ of the Bishops as you may think proper,  
 “ and on whose discretion you can depend.  
 “ I desire also to have your answer before  
 “ twelve to-morrow ; and return my letter.

(Signed) LOUIS.”

“ April 15, 1791.”

The firm and pious answer which the  
 Bishop of *Clermont* sent to the King, is not  
 less worthy of being transmitted to poste-  
 rity ; it was as follows :

“ SIRE,

“ If ever I wished for understanding and



“ wisdom from above, I must, on an occasion in which your Majesty orders me to acquaint you with my sentiments on a subject as delicate as interesting.

“ I will begin by expressing to your Majesty, how greatly I am flattered by the confidence which you have deigned to repose in me ; but at the same time that I feel all the honour and all the value of it, I cannot but be embarrassed from the thorough conviction of my insufficiency to decide so important a question as that which you have called upon me to answer. To supply my own deficiency, Sire, I have taken advantage of the liberty you have granted me to consult two of my brethren, whose discretion and understanding appear to me undoubted ; and it is this which has prevented my answering your Majesty before noon. I dare hope that you will excuse this unavoidable delay, as your letter was not delivered to me till nine o'clock in the morning.

“ Your Majesty does me the honour to ask me, if I think you can and ought to perform your Easter devotions under the unfortunate circumstances of your situation. I take the liberty of representing  
“ to



“ to your Majesty, that the subject ought to  
 “ be considered in two points of view ; first  
 “ in itself, and then as it respects public  
 “ edification. In the first point of view,  
 “ my extreme desire to see your Majesty  
 “ participate the Holy Communion at a  
 “ moment when you have the greatest need  
 “ of this resource, and to receive the God of  
 “ all consolation when you are assailed with  
 “ doubt and sorrow, prompts me to adopt  
 “ the sentiment of the priest whom you  
 “ have consulted, and of whose understand-  
 “ ing and fidelity to the Church there can  
 “ be no doubt. A sincere regret for the  
 “ past, a firm resolution for the future, are  
 “ necessary in order to receive absolution,  
 “ and to enable us to approach the Holy  
 “ Table. But these dispositions must be  
 “ manifest after having given occasion of  
 “ offence ; and I may be bold enough to say  
 “ to your Majesty, that the acceptance or  
 “ the sanction given to various decrees, par-  
 “ ticularly those which in the constitution  
 “ of the Clergy have respect to spiritual ob-  
 “ jects, as those of the 27th of November,  
 “ have been attended with consequences the  
 “ most woful to the Church, and the most  
 “ disastrous to Religion. I know that your



“ Majesty deplores them ; and you express  
“ yourself in your letter with the most re-  
“ ligious and edifying energy. I am con-  
“ vinced that considerations, which have  
“ appeared to you grounded on wisdom, and  
“ the love of peace, extorted from your hand  
“ what your heart disavowed. I am also fully  
“ persuaded, that you thought you might yield  
“ to compulsion ; but, Sire, when the ques-  
“ tion is respecting Religion and the law of  
“ God, your Majesty must be sensible that  
“ it was only by resistance to force that  
“ there were martyrs, and that the spilling  
“ of their blood to cement the work of our  
“ redemption, has been the most powerful  
“ means of transmitting to us this precious  
“ gift of heaven. I see powerful motives,  
“ and I find them in your heart, for adopt-  
“ ing the course favourable to your desires,  
“ which the priest whom you consulted  
“ thought might be adopted ; but, Sire, as  
“ it respects public edification, I am really  
“ alarmed ; and I take the liberty of stating  
“ to your Majesty, that as you cannot  
“ without incalculable inconvenience either  
“ repair the evil which the acceptation and  
“ sanctions have occasioned, or manifest the  
“ intention in time for the season in which  
“ you



“ you wish to satisfy on this head the reli-  
 “ gious sentiment which presses upon your  
 “ mind, it appears that the performing of  
 “ the Paschal duty, under such circum-  
 “ stances, would infallibly produce most  
 “ lamentable effects. All your subjects  
 “ know that your Majesty has consented  
 “ to the law subversive of their religion, but  
 “ few will allow for the situation in which  
 “ you are, or for the invincible obstacles  
 “ which your Majesty has to encounter in  
 “ the reparation you would make; and I  
 “ clearly see those who are invariably at-  
 “ tached to their principles would be con-  
 “ founded, the weak drawn into error by so  
 “ high an example, and the enemies of Re-  
 “ ligion confirmed in their triumph.

“ Sire, upon these considerations I am  
 “ bound to declare to your Majesty, that it  
 “ appears to me to be the most prudent to  
 “ suspend the Paschal communion. It is  
 “ certain, that in this conduct there is no-  
 “ thing contrary to the principles of Reli-  
 “ gion: the spiritual authority, whether by  
 “ confessors or in any other manner, con-  
 “ stantly permits these delays, which are law-  
 “ ful in many circumstances, and motives of



“ much less weight than those by which your  
“ Majesty would be determined, are suffi-  
“ cient. Sire, it appears to me important  
“ to foresee and prevent, even in a political  
“ view, what might happen if your Ma-  
“ jesty should hold yourself bound to per-  
“ form your Paschal duty in the Easter  
“ week: these views are not foreign to Re-  
“ ligion which is the life of peace, of tran-  
“ quillity, and public order. It is impos-  
“ sible to conceal that they who dare at-  
“ tempt to dictate your Majesty’s actions,  
“ will think it of great consequence to pre-  
“ vail upon you to adopt the resolution of  
“ going to the parish church. That would  
“ be a scandal: and if your Majesty were  
“ to take the Communion in your own  
“ chapel, you would perhaps expose your-  
“ self to what you so prudently have at  
“ heart to avoid; and I almost think that  
“ the postponing of it becomes a duty.

“ I am with the most profound

“ respect, &c. &c.

Signed ✠ Bishop of CLERMONT.”

“ *Paris, April 16,*  
1791.”

The



The King received this decision with as much respect and submission as if it had proceeded from the head of the Church, and his resolution to obey it was rather strengthened than shaken by the dangers to which it exposed him. Alas! no person possessed more of that passive courage, that martyr-like resignation than *Louis XVI.* Unfortunately it is not upon the Throne that these virtues, always estimable, are most necessary: they are even much oftener fatal than useful to a Prince who does not unite, like *St. Louis*, that greatness of soul, that energy of character, and that commanding firmness which ensure respect, inspire fear, and enforce obedience. Doubtless Kings should make themselves beloved, but they should also always take care to be feared. When they are told that they are the idols of their Nations, that they govern by love, &c. &c. they but hear an old flattering tale fit for a madrigal: truth, common sense and experience tell them on the contrary, that it is only by fear that the people are governed; and that no King can be loved by the good who is not feared by the wicked.

At the approach of the Easter week, the Factious exerted every means to agitate the people,



people, and make them anxious that the King should go to the parish church, and receive the Pascal Communion, from the hands of a Constitutional clergyman. “ If “ he refuses,” said they, “ he perjures “ himself; he violates the Constitution “ which he has accepted; he betrays the “ Nation; he puts himself at the head of “ the conspiracy of refractory priests, and “ so forth: if he submit to it (whispered “ they) we will accuse him of hypocrisy “ and cowardice. Thus, do what he will, “ he cannot but incur the censure of the “ patriots, or the indignation and contempt “ of all parties.”

The King, aware of these manœuvres, and of the double snare laid for him, saw no other means of escaping it than that of passing a part of the Easter weeks at St. Cloud, with the Royal Family. This plan seemed likely to meet with the fewer obstacles, as the King's health might be supposed to be the cause of it, the country air being proper for him after the disorder from which his Majesty was but just recovering; but the Factious were not to be so deceived. They immediately spread a report among the People and National Guard, that the



the King was going to St. Cloud only to avoid keeping his Easter at Paris; and that he had given up his usual confessor, the Minister of *St. Eustache*, because he had taken the new oath. The fermentation excited by these rumours made so rapid a progress, that on Palm Sunday, a National Grenadier, upon Guard at the Palace, took upon him, at mass time, and almost in the King's hearing, to make the most atrocious declamations upon his Majesty's Chapel being served by ecclesiastics who had not taken the oath, upon the danger of such an example, and upon the punishment it deserved, &c. &c. His comrades applauded him, and loudly repeated these imprecations at the door of the Chapel, in such a manner, that the service could not be begun for near half an hour; it was, however, performed at last, but with the dread of being interrupted every moment by some act of violence.

On the same day, and at the same hour, a large mob assembled at the door of the Theatins, and brutally turned away from it several worthy Catholics, to whom the Municipality had let that church, and who were going to attend the service to be performed there, by priests who had not taken the oath.

These



These scandalous, fanatic, and impious scenes, determined the King to set out the next day for St Cloud.

M. de la Fayette, apprehensive that his Majesty's departure might occasion some popular commotion, thought that to prevent it, he had only to increase the posts of the National Guard at the Palace, and at the *Place du Carouzel*, and to station them as far as the *Barriere de la Conference*; but this General was seldom fortunate in his precautions, and those which he took on this occasion, only served to insure success to the crime he wished to prevent; and even became the principal cause of it. Their Majesties set out, or rather endeavoured to set out, on Monday, in the Holy week, at noon, but they had scarcely arrived at the *Place du Carouzel*, when their carriage was surrounded, and stopped by an immense crowd, consisting chiefly of soldiers belonging to the National Guard. The cries of—*Don't let him pass! He shall not go!* were heard on all sides. At the least motion of the horses, clamours still more violent, broke forth; and more than once several muskets were seen levelled at the carriage.

In the midst of these tumults and vociferations,



ferations, the King, preserving the greatest serenity, sent for *M. de la Fayette*, and asked him if it was intended to dispute his right of going to St. Cloud ; and, desired if it were possible, to remove the crowd that stopped his way. *M. de la Fayette* answered, that his Majesty certainly was at liberty to go ; that he would speak to his soldiers, and only desired a few moments to clear the way for his carriage. He did, in fact, all that he could do ; but, his efforts only proved his want of power. He harangued, but his rhetoric was in vain ; and he went through the ranks with as little success, endeavouring to find some soldiers who might have the complaisance to obey him. The feeble voice of this popular General was every where drowned by that of the Sovereign People, who in this insurrection, which particularly related to Religion, truly thought that they were only performing *the most sacred of duties*.

*M. de la Fayette*, no longer able to doubt the inefficacy of his credit and influence over the National Guard, went and informed the King of the disposition of their minds, still repeating to his Majesty, that he was free ;



free; and that, if he persisted in his intention of proceeding to St. Cloud, he would put himself at the head of the King's carriage, with some brave Officers, and at the peril of his life, enforce the execution of the law.

The King, no doubt recollecting, that on the 5th of October 1789, *M. de la Fayette* had also assured him that he might remain quiet, and that he would answer for every thing, did not think it prudent to trust a second time to such assurances, and determined to return to the Palace, after having remained near an hour and a half in the same place in his carriage, from which he distinctly heard the menaces and seditious speeches of this misguided multitude. To save the honour of the Constitution, or at least to gloss over the manifest violation of it by open force, it was proclaimed upon the *Place du Carouzel*, that the King, unwilling to augment the uneasiness which his departure might occasion, had consented not to use the right he had of proceeding to St. Cloud, and to defer going for some days. All the revolutionary papers gave an account of this scandalous scene in the same terms,



terms, and the Directory of the Department hastened to confirm the imposture, by the indecent resolution entered into on the same day, purporting, that the *Sections of the Capital should be convoked by the Municipality, to determine the question arising upon the following case:*

“ The King intended to go this day to St.  
“ Cloud. A great number of Citizens  
“ fearing that the refractory might dare to  
“ make an improper use of his name, to  
“ give force to their Anti-Constitutional  
“ manœuvres, went and requested him not  
“ to leave town. The Mayor and Com-  
“ mander in Chief, fearing that the King  
“ might appear to be under constraint, de-  
“ clared to him, that he should never cease  
“ to be free ; and that, if he still chose to  
“ go to St. Cloud, every public means  
“ should be employed to prevent his meet-  
“ ing any impediment.

“ The King was apprehensive of a dis-  
“ turbance ; and, being unwilling to expose  
“ either the People or the National Guard,  
“ determined to stay. The Sections are re-  
“ quested to give their opinions upon the  
“ following question:—*Under these cir-*  
“ *cumstances,*



*“ cumstances, ought the King to be en-  
“ treated to put his first intention into exe-  
“ cution, which was to go to St. Cloud?  
“ or, ought thanks to be returned to him  
“ for staying, in order to preserve the pub-  
“ lic tranquillity? [Resolution of the  
“ Department, Monday, 18th of April  
“ 1791.”]*

This polite, this affected alternative, merely employed to disguise whatever was unconstitutional in the question, deceived no one. In fact, it was impossible not to understand very clearly, that it was asking the Factious, whether it was their pleasure to permit or prevent the King's going to St. Cloud.

The following day the Department went and communicated this resolution to the Assembly, which they had the baseness to approve. Scarce had the members of the Department retired than the President announced to the Assembly, that the King was coming to the Hall. His Majesty immediately entered at the same time, and spoke as follows\* :

*“ GEN-*

\* This step was urged by the Ministers, and so importunately,



“ GENTLEMEN,

“ I am come among you with the confi-  
“ dence I have always testified to you. You  
“ are informed of the opposition given yef-  
“ terday to my departure for St. Cloud. I  
“ was not willing to overcome it by force,  
“ because I feared to occasion acts of fe-  
“ verity against a deceived multitude, who  
“ thought they were protecting the laws,  
“ while they were infringing them; but it  
“ is of importance to the Nation to prove  
“ that I am free. Nothing is so essential  
“ to the authority of the sanctions and accep-  
“ tations which I have given to your Decrees.  
“ Governed by this powerful motive, I  
“ persist in my plan of going to St. Cloud,  
“ and the National Assembly must per-  
“ ceive the necessity of it. It seems, that  
“ in order to make a faithful people, and  
“ whose love I have deserved, rebellious,  
“ doubts are raised in their minds respect-  
“ ing my Constitutional sentiments. I have  
“ accepted, and sworn to maintain that

portunately, that his Majesty could not refuse. He ne-  
vertheless shortened the speech, the plan of which they  
had drawn up, and left out several phrases which ap-  
peared to him to want dignity. See Appendix,  
No. xv.



“ Constitution, of which the civil Consti-  
“ tution of the Clergy forms a part, and I  
“ do maintain the execution of it with all  
“ my power. This is but repeating the  
“ sentiments I have so often expressed be-  
“ fore the National Assembly. They know  
“ that my intentions and my wishes have  
“ no other object than the happiness of my  
“ People, and that happiness can only re-  
“ sult from the execution of the laws, and  
“ obedience to all the Legitimate and Con-  
“ stitutional authorities.”

The President, in his answer, mixed with  
the usual expressions of attachment, grati-  
tude, and so forth, some sentences, which  
pointed out the pretended faction of refrac-  
tory priests, as the principal cause of the  
troubles which afflicted the King. “ Sire,”  
said he, “ You, the People, Liberty, and  
“ the Constitution, have but one common  
“ interest. The base enemies of the Con-  
“ stitution and Liberty are also your ene-  
“ mies. All hearts are yours. As you  
“ wish the People’s happiness, the People  
“ wish for the happiness of their King. Let  
“ us prevent a Faction, well known by  
“ their projects, their efforts, and plots,  
“ from



“ from interfering between the Throne and  
“ the Nation, and every wish will be accom-  
“ plished. All uneasiness and distrust will  
“ disappear. Our common enemies will  
“ once more be confounded, and you will  
“ achieve a fresh victory for your Coun-  
“ try.”

His Majesty had been often interrupted by shouts of *Vive le Roi!* and repeated applauses, which were renewed on his leaving the Hall. The members of the *Coté-Droit*, far from joining in the homage paid to the King, were observed to keep a profound silence—it was the silence of consternation. A Deputation was named to go and thank the King for the step he had just taken, and to request a copy of his speech, which it was decreed should be printed and sent to the Departments, to serve as a proclamation for the re-establishment of public peace.—But the Assembly did not dare to determine any thing respecting the King's going to St. Cloud. They did not even suffer a single motion to be made on the subject. *M. de Blacons*, attempting to put the Assembly in mind of what the King had said on the necessity of this journey, all the members of the *Coté-Gauche* rose at once, and desired



that he might be sent to the Abbaye. *M. de Cazalés* and some other members of the *Coté-Droit* endeavoured to speak, but the order of the day, and the breaking up of the Sitting were so loudly called for, that the President (*Chabroud*) put it to the vote, and the motion of adjournment was carried. The Department had submitted the question respecting the King's going to St. Cloud, to all the Sections of the Capital, and the Assembly had already lost too much of its popularity to dare to dispute the power of the Sections, or anticipate their decision.

Before the King went to the Sitting, his Majesty received from the Department of Paris, an address drawn up by *M. Pastoret*, *Procureur-General-Syndic*, and *M. de Talleyrand*, the late Bishop of *Autun*, on the subject of the insurrection which had taken place the day before. Some of the phrases were thought to belong to the Abbé *Sieyès* their colleague. This performance is too remarkable to be entirely passed over; these are its leading traits:

“ SIRE,

“ Can the confidence which the People  
“ repose in your person long resist the im-  
“ pressions



“ preffions which men, eager to enjoy Li-  
“ berty, receive from thofe who are about  
“ you? The enemies of Liberty, alarmed  
“ at your patriotifm, have determined *to*  
“ *affail your confcience*. Concealing their  
“ humbled pride under the veil of holinefs,  
“ they fhed hypocritical tears over Religion.  
“ Such, Sire, are the men by whom you are  
“ furrounded. It is with pain remarked,  
“ that you favour the refractory; that you  
“ are ferved almoft entirely by the enemies  
“ of the Conftitution; and it is feared that  
“ thefe preferences, which are but too ma-  
“ nifeft, indicate the real inclination of  
“ your heart. Sire, act freely, and remove  
“ the enemies of the Conftitution from about  
“ you. Announce to foreign Nations that  
“ a glorious Revolution has taken place in  
“ France; that you have adopted it, and  
“ that you are now the King of a free  
“ People; for this purpofe, choofe Minif-  
“ ters of a new kind, and fuch as are not  
“ unworthy of fo auguft an office; and let  
“ the Nation learn that their King has placed  
“ about his perfon the firmeft fupporters of  
“ Liberty, for at prefent they only are the  
“ King’s real and ufeful friends.”



The National Assembly themselves, at the time they enjoyed the greatest popularity, never presented to the King more insolent complaints, or more imperious advice. The style of this address gives an exact idea of the degree of power which the Directory of the Department of Paris had already acquired through the audacity and ability of their principal members; and we may judge of the advantages which *Mirabeau*, the boldest and ablest of them all, might have drawn from it for the execution of his plan, if death had allowed him time.

The same complaints, the same counsels, were repeated to the King, in an address presented to him by the Municipality; and on the same day the Directory of the Department of the Seine and Oise (Versailles) resolved to petition the Assembly to decree, Constitutionally, that *every servant and domestic of the King, Queen, or presumptive heir to the Throne, of whatever nature his service might be, should be bound to take the oath of maintaining the Constitution of the Kingdom to the best of his power, and such as were ecclesiastics, to maintain moreover the civil Constitution of the Clergy.*

On



On the following day, *M. de la Fayette*, humbled, and justly, by the silly and ridiculous part which the obstinate disobedience of the whole of the National Guard had made him play on the 18th, sent his resignation of the post of Commander-in-Chief and that of the whole Staff, to the Municipality. This unexpected step set the whole town in an uproar, and all the battalions in motion. Almost all of them went to his house in the evening, to assure him of their repentance and attachment, and most earnestly entreated him to withdraw his resignation. *M. de la Fayette*, being overwhelmed in silent sadness, and answering them only with sighs, or unmeaning monosyllables, several of them, attended with flambeaux, went to the Municipality to beg them to go and second their solicitation. They arrived at eleven o'clock at night, with *M. Bailly* at their head, at the General's house, and were shut up with him in his Cabinet about an hour, without being able to obtain an answer.

In the midst of this confusion and agitation, the fermentation against the faithful priests became more and more violent, and alarmed the King extremely. It was particularly against those that belonged to his



Chapel that the pamphlets and Revolutionary Journals endeavoured to direct the fury of the People. His Majesty had flattered himself to protect them by going to St. Cloud, but he now gave up all hopes of being suffered to leave Paris. It was at this moment of embarrassment, wretchedness, and despair, that the *Lameth party* made an offer of their counsels and services to the King. This party was then the strongest in the Assembly, and that which the King held most in horror. His Majesty, however, perceiving that nothing contrary to his religious principles was required from him in their proposals, determined to accept them, and in consequence, caused the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to write to all the Ambassadors and Ministers of France, in the different Courts of Europe, that famous circular letter, in which the King, through his Minister, proclaimed himself perfectly free, at a moment when no one could doubt his being in a state of slavery, and made the most pompous eulogium upon the Constitution which dethroned him\*. The Depart-

\* See the letter from *M. de Montmorin* to the Ambassadors. Appendix, No. xvi.



ment, and the Municipality, having, in their respective addressees, advised the King to take the same step, he did not doubt, but that they had entered into a most formidable coalition with the *Lameth party*, who had drawn up the letter in question; and this opinion, which was but too probable, got the better of his Majesty's extreme repugnance to profess sentiments not his own, and to appear to put confidence in people in whom he had none.

*M. de Montmorin* could not approve a determination so opposite to the plan which he had prevailed upon the King to adopt, and for the execution of which he kept up a constant correspondence with *M. de Mercy* and *M. de Florida Blanca*, the Spanish Minister. He remonstrated very strongly, on this occasion, to his Majesty. “ The step  
“ proposed to you,” said he, “ not only com-  
“ mits the dignity of your character, but  
“ endangers the success of the important  
“ negotiation in which the Emperor is at  
“ this moment employed by your desire to  
“ re-establish the Monarchy, and to restore  
“ you to your Crown and liberty. Can your  
“ Majesty be deceived as to the conse-  
“ quences of the letter which you order me  
“ to



“ to write? No doubt it will purchase for  
“ you great applauses from the Assembly  
“ and the Galleries—cries of *Vive le Roi!*  
“ nay, perhaps a TE DEUM and illumina-  
“ tions. How often has your Majesty al-  
“ ready found that this popular enthusiasm  
“ vanishes in as little time as it requires to  
“ excite it; and that if advantage be not  
“ immediately taken of it, the next day is  
“ too late. I must also observe, that if I  
“ sign such a letter, it will brand me with  
“ such ignominy in all the Courts of Europe,  
“ that my services will become more preju-  
“ dicial than useful to your Majesty’s in-  
“ terests.”—“ The most urgent considera-  
“ tion,” replied the King, “ is to avert  
“ the dangers of the moment, to prevent  
“ the massacre of our good priests, and I see  
“ no other means. All Europe must know  
“ under what circumstances this letter was  
“ written. The Powers will not be deceived  
“ by it; they will clearly see, that it comes  
“ neither from you nor me, and that it is  
“ an act of compulsion. You may even  
“ apprise *M. de Mercy* of it\*.” *M. de*

\* This conversation took place on Wednesday in the  
Holy Week, the 20th of April.

*Mont-*



*Montmorin*, without making any answer to his Majesty, received the letter from his hands, and went home to reflect upon it.— In considering it with profound attention, new arguments presented themselves to him, which he thought more decisive than those he had already urged to the King. Of these he composed a letter, which he sent the following day to his Majesty, and which concluded in the following manner:

“ Should your Majesty, notwithstanding  
“ what I have now said, persist in the de-  
“ termination you communicated to me, I  
“ here add the resignation of my office, that  
“ your Majesty may order the letter which  
“ I have the honour to return to you, to be  
“ signed by some other Minister for Fo-  
“ reign Affairs. The sacrifice of my place  
“ I consider as nothing, when it is required  
“ by honour, by my duty, and above all,  
“ by my faithful adherence to the interests  
“ of my King.”

His Majesty answered this letter by the following note:—“ I will keep your re-  
“ signation, because it may hereafter serve  
“ to



“ to prove that you sent it to me on this  
“ occasion ; but I do not accept it, and I  
“ will explain my reasons to you. Come  
“ to me this morning without fail.”

In the conversation, which took place in consequence of this note, the King told *M. de Montmorin* that, not expecting his refusal, he had charged *M. de Lessart* to write immediately to the Department and the Municipality, to inform them of the orders about to be given to the Ambassadors and Ministers of France, at foreign Courts ; that *M. de Lessart's* letter would be inserted in the public papers \*, and that it was impossible to defer a measure so officially announced. “ Besides,” added his Majesty, “ you need have no apprehensions about your honour : I engage to justify you completely at a proper time.” These assurances, accompanied by the most earnest entreaties, at last determined *M. de Montmorin* to sign the letter addressed to the Ambassadors.

This anecdote, known to but very few, will no doubt find many disinclined to give

\* *M. de Lessart's* letter was inserted on the 22d of April, in several papers, and among others in the *Moniteur*, No. 112.



it credit ; and will perhaps be contradicted by some. I declare beforehand then that all my proofs of it rest, first, upon the assertion of *M. de Montmorin*, who, in answer to my reproaches for signing such a letter, shewed me the King's note above-mentioned, and told me the circumstances which I have just related : and in the next place, upon the certain fact, which I learned from the King himself, of *M. de Montmorin's* resignation, given at the time of writing the letter to the Ambassadors, and kept by his Majesty till the month of November 1792, when it was accepted on being again urged by *M. de Montmorin*.

The letter proposed by the *Lameth Party* was sent on the 23d of April to all the Ambassadors and Ministers of France at foreign Courts, and on the same day *M. de Montmorin* sent a copy of it to the Assembly. The rapture excited by the reading of it among the Members of the *Coté-Gauche* and in the galleries, was expressed by continued applauses, and by a thousand cries of *Vive le Roi !* repeated almost at every sentence : but the Members of the *Coté-Droit*, in greater consternation than ever, kept the profoundest silence.

Alexander



*Alexander de Lameth*, immediately after the reading of this letter, rose, and extolled to the clouds this solemn testimony of the King's attachment to the new Constitution, and the happy effects which were to be expected from it. He moved to thank him for it in a particular manner, by sending a Deputation to him. Several persons called out that the Assembly should wait on the King in a body, and that a medal should be struck to commemorate this day. *Robespierre* moderated this enthusiasm by observing, that the King would, no doubt, see with pain the Assembly, forgetting their dignity, move in a body from their places: besides, it was not seasonable to thank his Majesty, as it was not now that the Assembly were for the first time to believe in his patriotism; that on the contrary they ought to think that from the beginning of the Revolution the King has remained constantly attached to it: and instead of thanking, they should congratulate him on the perfect harmony of his sentiments with those of the Nation. This motion was adopted; and it was decreed at the same time, that the King's letter should be sent to all the civil and military bodies throughout the French empire.



The President then went to the Palace at the head of a numerous Deputation. In his speech to the King, he expressed the sentiments and enthusiasm which the Assembly had manifested. “The French will not be surprised,” added he, “at this new proof which you give them of your affection. Your heart, Sire, is known to them. They are accustomed to pronounce your name with all the overflowings of tenderness and gratitude which are due to great benefits. The moment is arrived in which a calm will succeed to the fears and hopes between which the Nation were fluctuating in uncertainty. The hydra of Faction had a hundred heads; you have struck off the last. Sire, I presume to say to your Majesty, that you will be happy; for you have now secured the happiness of the People.”

“I am infinitely sensible,” answered the King, “of the justice which the National Assembly renders me. If they could read the bottom of my heart, they would there find only sentiments that would justify the Nation’s confidence: every  
“distrust



“ distrust would be banished ; we should all  
“ be happy.”

The applauses and acclamations were renewed with transport when the Deputation reported this answer to the Assembly : they ordered it to be printed, and to be sent to all the Municipal Bodies : but the following day not a single trace remained of that enthusiasm which the letter to the Ambassadors had at first excited. It exasperated all honest men ; and the Democrats themselves, finding it too exaggerated to believe it sincere, accused the King of falsehood and perfidy. Thus this step, far from producing the happy effects which his Majesty had been made to hope from it, only increased distrust, and rendered his situation more critical than it was before. Printed papers stuck up upon the very doors of his palace, announced that there were relays prepared on the road from St. Cloud to Compeigne, to favour his departure : and thus the King was obliged to renounce his excursion to St. Cloud, which he had so much at heart.

*M. de la Fayette*, a stranger to all this intrigue of the *Lameth Party*, was wholly engaged



engaged with his own situation with respect to the Municipality and the National Guard. He appeared on the 22d of April at the Sitting of the Council-General of the Commune, and related, with equal tendernefs and patriotism, the causes of his discouragement, and the motives which made him persist in his resignation. “ I do not think,” said he, “ that the National Guard, the great majority of whom were always superior to the seductions of the spirit of licentiousness and party, can have seen with indifference the constitutional authorities disregarded, their orders despised, and the public force opposed to the laws which it is bound to see executed. However, Gentlemen, in the very kind marks of affection which I have received, I feel they have done too much for me, too little for the laws. I am convinced, with a heart-felt satisfaction, that my comrades love me: but I cannot say that I know how much they cherish the principles upon which liberty is founded. Gentlemen, I make this sincere avowal of my sentiments to you; pray, communicate them to the National Guards, from whom I have received the tokens of friendship with great sensibility, and to

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“ whom I shall always be an affectionate  
“ and grateful brother. I own, that to take  
“ the command of them it would be ne-  
“ cessary for me to be assured, that personal  
“ liberty, the safety of families, religious  
“ liberty, and respect for the lawful autho-  
“ rities, would, without exception, be held  
“ as sacred by them as by myself. It is  
“ not only courage and vigilance that we  
“ want, but also unanimity in the princi-  
“ ples which I have stated to you ; and I  
“ thought, and still think, that the Consti-  
“ tution would be better served by a refig-  
“ nation, from the motives I have stated,  
“ than by my compliance with the request  
“ with which you have honoured me.”

So affectionate, so caressing a refusal could not long remain invincible. Nothing could be more grateful to *M. de la Fayette's* mind than to yield, but he wished to yield with dignity ; above all, he wished some little reparation for the glaring affront he had received on the 18th ; and his speech to the Council of the Commune pointed out clearly enough the kind of reparation he desired. The National Guard did not mistake it. The very next morning a battalion entered  
into



into the following resolution, and sent it to the fifty-nine other battalions :

“ The National Assembly decreed, that  
“ the public force was essentially obedient,  
“ and a part of the Parisian army have  
“ shewn themselves essentially disobedient.

“ *M. de la Fayette* ceased to command  
“ them only because they ceased to obey  
“ the law. He requires an entire submis-  
“ sion to the law, and not a fruitless attach-  
“ ment to his person.

“ Let the battalions assemble, and let  
“ every citizen-soldier swear upon his ho-  
“ nour, and sign his name, to obey the law :  
“ let those who refuse, be excluded from  
“ the National Guard ; and let the wishes  
“ of this army, so regenerated, be commu-  
“ nicated to *M. de la Fayette*, and he will  
“ hold it his duty to resume the command  
“ of it.

“ Let those who so shamefully offended  
“ the Royal Family be punished, and turned  
“ out of the National Guard.”

The following day all the battalions re-  
newed their oath of obedience to the law.  
The result of their deliberations was trans-



mitted to the Municipality, and communicated to *M. de la Fayette*, who at length consented to resume his post as Commander-in-Chief. Two days afterwards, the Grenadier who had dared to make use of such violent language on Palm Sunday at the door of the King's Chapel, was discharged; and the Municipality resolved, that the Grenadier Company\* of the battalion of *l'Oratoire*, who on the 18th had set an example of insubordination, should be disbanded. In pursuance of this resolution, *M. de la Fayette* repaired at noon to the Court of *l'Oratoire*, where, in presence of several detachments of the National Guard, he made those Grenadiers deliver up their muskets, swords, and other accoutrements, and disbanded them.

While *M. de la Fayette* employed these petty methods of re-establishing discipline in the Parisian army, the Assembly were completing the disorganization of the French army, by authorising all Officers and soldiers to attend the Sitzings of the Jacobin Clubs when not upon duty, and till the hour of going to quarters. It may here be observed,

\* This was a company of the *Paid Guards (Soldés)*, formerly the French Guards.



that this decree, proposed by the Minister of War, was passed upon the report of *Alexander de Beauharnois*, and strongly supported by *M. de Noailles* and *M. de Tracy*, all three Colonels. Indeed this is what the highest Orders of the State experienced in this Assembly, in which the Clergy, the Nobility, and the Magistracy, found their most bitter enemies among the chiefs of their own members, and the King a regicide in the only Prince of the blood deputed to the States-General. The truth of this observation is but too well supported by the facts I have already related; and those make it unnecessary for me to repeat here so many odious names.



## CHAPTER XL.

*The King, drawn by his Situation into some Errors, follows at the same Time the Plan of the Baron de Breteuil, that of M. de Montmorin, and that of the Lameth Party, and projects a fourth—Secret Mission of Count Alphonso de Durfort—The Count d'Artois sees the Emperor at Mantua, and decides upon a Plan with his Imperial Majesty—Count Alphonso de Durfort employed to carry a Copy of it to the King—The Pope's Brief against the Civil Constitution of the Clergy—Report on the Request of the Comtat of Avignon for its Union with France—The Patriotism of the Parisians grows cold—They are disgusted with the Assembly*



*Assembly — The Assembly engaged upon the Organization of the Legislative Body that is to succeed them—Remarkable Letter of the Abbé Raynal to the Assembly—Its Effect — Energetic Step of M. de Montmorin—Its Success—The Office of the Minister of Marine offered to me—I decline it—M. Thevenard appointed to it — Uneasiness occasioned by the Emigrants and the Prince de Condé—Declaration which the Assembly desire the King to make known to that Prince—The Cardinal de la Rochefoucault denounced—He escapes a Decree of Impeachment by a very small Majority.*

CARDINAL de Retz says very truly, that there are situations in which do what we will we can only commit errors. The King was not blind to that which he had committed, in suffering himself to be directed for a time by the *Lameth party*; but it was the only means he saw of avoiding the massacre of the priests, and in fact, I doubt whether there was any other. This error, into which the King was drawn by circumstances and by motives which cannot be

E 4

blamed,



blamed, was unfortunately not the only one which at this period he had to repent. The constant remonstrances of the Marquis *de Bouillé* against the journey to Montmedi should have prevailed on his Majesty to abandon that project; especially when *M. de Montmorin* proposed another, which, without exposing him to any danger, led to the same end by a course more proper in every respect. It seemed at least that the King, after having adopted the latter plan, should have waited till it had failed, before he returned to the former. It was, however, quite the contrary; and it cannot be denied, that on this occasion his Majesty attended much less to the counsels of prudence than to the eagerness, doubtless very natural, to recover his liberty, and to rescue the Royal Family from the humiliations and dangers to which they ought never to have been exposed.

There is no other way of accounting for all the false steps which necessarily attended the dangerous experiment of pursuing the same object by several opposite plans, the principal agents of which could neither concert together nor understand each other, and whose



whose means of execution, far from receiving reciprocal support, could only be hurtful. How, in fact, could the plan of a secret departure for Montmedi be reconciled with that of not leaving Paris till the Powers had declared war, and till the King had been called upon by addresses from the Departments, and by the wishes of the army? or, with the measures proposed by the *Lameth party*? and yet, his Majesty not only carried on these three projects together, but also formed a fourth, unknown either to the *Baron de Breteuil* or *M. de Montmorin*. I had myself only formed mere conjectures respecting this fact, which was occasioned by some words that had escaped the King at different times, and I never took the liberty of asking him any questions on this subject; but since I left France, I have received the most accurate information upon this interesting point, and I declare, that the truth of the facts which I am going to relate, has been attested to me either verbally or by writing, by four persons who were the most likely to be perfectly acquainted with it: I mean *M. de Lascazas*, the Spanish Ambassador, *M. de Calonne*, the Count *de Vaudreuil*,



*dreuil*, and the Count *Alphonse de Durfort* \*.

The extreme uneasiness which the insurrection of the 18th of April, and the fermentation which followed, gave the King and the Queen, made them desirous of informing the Count *d'Artois* of their true situation, and of the state of affairs in France, more accurately and circumstantially than prudence would permit by letters. Their Majesties determined to send a confidential person to him, and one whose attachment and loyalty were known to his Royal Highness. They cast their eyes on the Count *Alphonse de Durfort*, and charged *M. de C——* to sound him, respecting some secret mission for the service of the King, without telling him the nature of it, and to assure him at the same time, that their Majesties did not insist upon his undertaking it, and that they should not be the least displeased if he declined it. *M. de C——* mentioned it to him on Good Friday (22d April). Count

\* The Count *Alphonso de Durfort*, who was charged with the secret commission related in the following pages, has written the particulars of it, in a memoir which he communicated to me.

*Alphonso*



*Alphonse de Durfort's* answer was, that whatever was for the service of the King required no time for consideration, and that he would undertake the mission, whatever were its object. *M. de C——* then told him the circumstances, desired him to reflect upon it, and if he persisted in undertaking it, he was to attend at the Queen's party on Easter Monday, and answer *No, Madam*, to the questions which her Majesty would ask him on the departure of the Venetian Ambassadors, as it was agreed with her Majesty that this should be the sign of his undertaking it. Count *Alphonse* afterwards consulted with *M. de C——* on the mode of rendering his commission as useful and satisfactory as it could be to their Majesties and his Royal Highness the Count *d'Artois*. The method which appeared best to him for this purpose, was to propose to their Majesties the various questions which he presumed the Count *d'Artois* would not fail to put to him, to receive their answers to these questions, and to deliver them to his Royal Highness.

*M. de C——* mentioned this plan to the King and Queen, who approved it. Count *Alphonse*, in consequence, went to the  
Queen's



Queen's party, on Easter Monday, and there made the answer agreed upon relative to the departure of the Venetian Ambassadors.— On the next day he had an interview with their Majesties, who permitted him to present his questions to them, and to write their answer, in order to impress them upon his memory. The following is an exact copy of those questions and answers: the answers are supposed to be addressed to the Count d'Artois.

*1st Question.* Do your Majesties confide in the intentions and in the zeal of the Count d'Artois? Is there any ground for the anxiety he has been made to suffer, as to your sentiments in respect to him, and as to your intentions to put yourselves into the hands of the Factious in the Assembly, rather than owe your safety, and the re-establishment of your authority, to the efforts and success of the Princes, in conjunction with the Nobility of the Kingdom?

*Answer.* (*dictated by the Queen*). You are deceived. Your situation is that which occupies their Majesties most. How can it be believed, that with the exalted spirit you know they possess, they prefer remaining under



under the yoke of infamous villains, to being succoured by their near relations and faithful servants?

*2d Question.* What do your Majesties think of *M. de la Fayette*?

*Answer.* We consider him as a fanatic, weak, factious man, in whom we can never have the least confidence.

*3d Question.* What do you think of *M. de Montmorin*?

*Answer.* His will is good, but he has no power.

*4th Question.* Has the Archbishop of Sens any influence on the determinations of your Majesties?

*Answer.* None. He is generally abhorred and despised by all parties. We concur in this public opinion. He has besides deceived us.

*5th Question.* Why did the King go to the Assembly, after being prevented from going to St. Cloud?

*Answer.* He was forced by his Ministers, on whom he could not rely.

*6th Question.* In what state is the mind of the People? Have your Majesties in the Assembly any persons on whom you can rely?

*Answer.*



*Answer.* The mind of the People is detestable; they are for no King. We have no person in the Assembly. The only Deputy who made overtures to us is dead.

*7th Question.* How is the letter addressed to all the Ambassadors to be justified?

*Answer.* The date proves the necessity of it. The King did not sign it, and he made no alteration in it, that it might appear as monstrous as it really was: it was drawn up by members of the Assembly, who thought this step indispensably necessary, and who expected great success from it.

*8th Question.* Have your Majesties a desire or intention of leaving Paris?

*Answer.* The greatest desire; but the means of effecting it appear to us almost impossible. In case the opportunity should offer, we wish to know beforehand in what place we should be most secure, by Valenciennes or Metz. We are very anxious on this head.

The King and Queen authorised Count *Alphonse* to inform *M. de Calonne* of his mission, to assure him that their Majesties were pleased to see the confidence which the Count *d'Artois* had in him, and that they were



were convinced, that he would give him such counsel only as would be for their service. They charged him also to advise him to break off all correspondence with the Viscountess *de L.* whose opinions were more than suspected, and who, living publicly with the late Bishop of *Autun*, might acquaint him with every thing she knew, and thus injure the business; and to tell him that one of the letters which he had written to her, and in which he had expressed his hopes for the speedy re-establishment of Cardinal *de Montmorency*, had been shewn to the Queen by *Madame de Laynes*.

On the 28th of April Count *Alphonse* set out for Switzerland. He saw *M. d'Autichamp* at Berne, who acquainted him that the Count *d'Artois* was at *Vicenza*.

At this period the Emperor, who was travelling in Italy with his sister, the Queen of Naples, went to Florence. *M. de Calonne* arriving there, his Imperial Majesty consented to see him, and had several private conferences with him, in a small retired house, separated from the Palace, to which, from a singular humour, the Emperor always went alone, without any suite or servants,



vants, and opened the door himself to the persons whom he appointed to meet him there.

*M. de Calonne*, after having disclosed the views and wishes of the Count *d'Artois* to the Emperor, engaged him to grant the Prince an interview, and his Imperial Majesty said he would, without delay, appoint the day and place. *M. de Calonne* returned to inform the Count *d'Artois* of this : and it was at this juncture that Count *Alphonse* arrived at Vicenza, where he found his Royal Highness, and acquainted him with the object of his mission. The Prince, greatly affected, and shedding tears at the misfortunes of the King and Queen, and at the confidence that their Majesties reposed in him, became the more impatient to see the Emperor, and to impress him with his own emotions. He flattered himself to be able to excite his feelings so strongly as to determine him to adopt measures the most likely to deliver their Majesties speedily from the dreadful situation to which they were reduced, and to prevent the calamities which threatened France.

The Emperor having informed the Count  
*d'Artois*



*d'Artois*, that the interview which he had promised him should take place at Mantua on the 20th of May, the Prince repaired thither on that day, accompanied by *M. de Calonne*, *M. Descars* and Count *Alphonse de Durfort*, and on his arrival sent to inquire at what hour the Emperor would receive him. His Imperial Majesty answered, that it should be at what hour he pleased, and invited him to dinner. The Count *d'Artois* went in the uniform of the Swiss Regiment, and was received by the Emperor as favourably as he could desire. The joy and surprise of his Royal Highness were extreme, when he learned that a powerful coalition was forming for the relief of the King and Queen; that the Emperor was already assured of the concurrence of the Circles, Switzerland, Spain, Sardinia, and other Powers; and that it only remained to determine, by a well concerted plan, the most advantageous manner of employing these forces, and the measures to be taken in the interior to second this movement and insure its success, without their Majesties being reduced to the necessity of executing the project of retreating to Metz, of which *M. de Mercy* had informed the Emperor.



After dinner the Count *d'Artois* went to *M. de Calonne*, and charged him immediately to draw up a note upon the different objects on which his Royal Highness had treated in this conversation. This note, and the plan that resulted from it, being finished the same day at eight in the evening, the Count *d'Artois* immediately returned, accompanied by *M. de Calonne*, to communicate it to the Emperor.

The discussion of this plan took up more than two hours; and the Emperor with his own hand corrected several articles, and particularly that in which the march of the troops was settled for the month of July or August: he fixed it *for the month of July at farthest*. When all the articles were agreed and resolved upon, his Imperial Majesty sent for Count *Alphonse*, and with his own lips assured him of his firm resolution to execute the plan of which he was to be the bearer. “You will give my compliments “to my brother and sister,” added the Emperor, “and tell them that we are going to “set about their affairs, and that it will not “be by words, but by deeds.”

As Count *Alphonse* was to set off the following day for Paris, the rest of the night  
1 was



was employed in making three copies of the plan which he was to take with him ; that designed for the King was written with milk, and given to Count *Alphonse*, who, by mistake, and without *M. de Calonne's* perceiving it, also took with him the minute corrected by the Emperor's hand. He was expressly enjoined to learn all the articles by heart before he set off, lest unforeseen circumstances should oblige him to destroy the copy he carried. The day after his departure he was overtaken at Basle, by an Aide-Camp of the Count *d'Artois*, who delivered a letter to him from *M. de Calonne*, in which that Minister informed him, that letters which his Royal Highness had just received from *Madame Elizabeth* contained intelligence that his journey and the object of it were known in France ; that he would certainly be stopped and searched at the frontiers, and that he ought not to hesitate to burn the copy he had, having first restored the writing by coal-dust, or by holding it to the fire, in order to impress it more deeply on his memory, and to be able to give the King the most exact account of it.



Count *Alphonse* did not doubt but that the alarm which *Madame Elizabeth* had given to the Count *d'Artois* had been suggested to that Princess by one of those persons, who, either out of curiosity or to make a parade of their zeal, are eager to spread chimerical fears, or relate stories invented on purpose to endeavour to discover something of a secret concealed from them. He therefore only burned, in presence of the Aid-de-Camp who had been sent to him, the copy written with milk which he was to have delivered to the King, but not the minute which was also in his port-folio.

Count *Alphonse's* mission had not prevented the King from pursuing the plan, and making preparations for his departure for Montmedy. The travelling coach which the Count *de Ferson* had been commissioned to order for their Majesties was ready, and *M. de Goguelas*, who had been sent by *M. de Bouillé* in the latter end of April to inform the King of the different dispositions planned by the General, was waiting for his Majesty's final orders. *M. de Montmorin*, who was equally ignorant of Count *Alphonse's* mission, and the plan of going to Montmedy,



Montmedy, was carrying on the most active correspondence to accelerate the execution of his plan, and was informed by *M. de Mercy* of the progress and success of the negotiation relative to a coalition of the Powers. The King, to whom he gave an account of it, calculating that the Austrian army might arrive in the environs of Arlon about the middle of the month of June, sent off *M. de Goguelas* in the beginning of May, and charged him with a letter, in which his Majesty mentioned this to *M. de Bouillé*, and informed him that he intended to set out on the 15th of June; therefore that all the preparations should be made for that period: but that the King would apprise him more positively of the day and hour for his departure.

The King in another letter, dated the 27th of May, informed *M. de Bouillé*, that the departure of the Royal Family was finally fixed for the 19th of June, between midnight and one o'clock in the morning\*. The following day Count *Alphonse*, of whom the King had had no tidings since his departure, arrived at Paris on the seventh day

\* See *M. de Bouillé's* Memoirs, chap. xii.



after his leaving Mantua, without having been searched, stopped, or questioned, either on the frontiers or in the towns through which he had passed. On his arrival, he saw *M. de C\*\*\**, and communicated the plan settled at Mantua, and of which he had made a fresh copy. Their Majesties, on being informed of his arrival, charged *M. de C\*\*\** to bring him the following day at eleven in the morning to the King's room, through the door that opened into the apartment of his Majesty's head valet-de-chambre. He attended at the appointed hour. The King and Queen were already there, and gave him such a reception as the service he had rendered them deserved. He delivered to their Majesties the plan with which he was charged, and of which the following is a faithful extract:

“ The Emperor shall order 35,000 men  
“ to march towards the frontiers of Flanders  
“ and Hainault, and at the same time the  
“ troops of the Circles, to the number of  
“ 15,000 men, shall proceed to Alsace.  
“ The same number of Swiss shall appear  
“ on the frontiers of the Lyonnois and  
“ Franche Comté; the King of Sardinia  
“ upon



“ upon that of Dauphiné with 15,000 men.  
“ Spain has already assembled 12,000 men  
“ in Catalonia, and will raise them to  
“ 20,000 troops, to threaten the southern  
“ Provinces. These different armies will  
“ form a mass of about 100,000 men,  
“ which shall march in five columns to the  
“ several frontiers bordering on the differ-  
“ ent States. To these armies shall be joined  
“ the regiments remaining loyal, the armed  
“ volunteers who may be relied on, and all  
“ the malcontents of the provinces.

“ The Emperor is assured of the good  
“ disposition of the King of Prussia; and  
“ his Imperial Majesty has himself under-  
“ taken the direct correspondence with the  
“ Court of Berlin. The King of England  
“ as Elector of Hanover also desires to enter  
“ into the coalition, which must be kept a  
“ profound secret till the instant of the ex-  
“ plosion: for which reason care must be  
“ taken to prevent any partial insurrection  
“ in the Interior.

“ All being thus arranged for the end of  
“ July, the declaration of the House of Bour-  
“ bon shall appear: it shall be signed by  
“ the King of Spain, the King of Naples,  
“ the Infant of Parma, and the Princes of



“ the Blood that are at liberty. The Mani-  
“ festo of the Powers engaged in the coa-  
“ lition shall appear immediately after.

“ Although the Emperor is the soul and  
“ leader of the enterprize, it would most  
“ probably place the Queen in a perilous  
“ situation if he should appear as the prime  
“ mover ; for this plan would be certainly  
“ attributed to the House of Austria, and  
“ the Assembly will use their utmost en-  
“ deavours to render it odious to the People.

“ The Emperor is going to write to the  
“ King of Spain to hasten his preparations,  
“ and exhort him to sign without delay the  
“ declaration of the House of Bourbon. The  
“ King and Queen of Naples, who are ac-  
“ quainted with it, only wait the signature  
“ of Spain to affix theirs.

“ The intentions of the King of Sardinia  
“ are excellent : he only waits the Empe-  
“ ror's signal. The Diet of Ratisbon, who  
“ have received the decree for a commission,  
“ are about to take their last resolutions.

“ The neutrality of England may be re-  
“ lied upon.

“ Every thing being thus concerted with the  
“ Powers, this plan ought to be considered  
“ as settled ; and care should be taken that

“ it



“ it is not thwarted by jarring ideas. Their  
“ Majesties should carefully avoid dividing  
“ their confidence, and letting many into  
“ the secret ; having already experienced  
“ that it only hurts, retards, and embar-  
“ rasses.

“ The Parliaments are necessary for the  
“ re-establishment of forms ; consequently  
“ a continual correspondence must be kept  
“ up with several Members of the Supreme  
“ Courts, to be able to reassemble them  
“ easily when the time comes.

“ Though hitherto it had been wished  
“ that their Majesties might themselves  
“ procure their liberty, the present situation  
“ of affairs makes it necessary to entreat  
“ them earnestly to drop the idea. Their  
“ position is very different from that in  
“ which they stood previous to the 18th of  
“ April, before the King had been com-  
“ pelled to go to the Assembly, and to  
“ cause the letter to be written to the Am-  
“ bassadors. The only object that ought to  
“ take up their Majesties’ attention, is to  
“ employ every possible means to increase  
“ their popularity, to take advantage of it  
“ when the time should come, and so that  
“ the people, alarmed at the approach of the  
“ foreign



“ foreign armies, should find their safety  
“ only in the King’s mediation, and their  
“ submission to his Majesty’s authority.  
“ This is the Emperor’s opinion. He de-  
“ pends solely on this plan of conduct for  
“ the success of the measures which he has  
“ adopted, and particularly requests that  
“ every other may be given up. What  
“ might happen to their Majesties, if in  
“ their flight they should not be able to es-  
“ cape a barbarous vigilance, makes him  
“ shudder with horror. His Imperial Ma-  
“ jesty thinks that their Majesties’ surest  
“ course is the movement of the armies of  
“ the allied Powers, preceded by threaten-  
“ ing manifestos.”

The plan being read, their Majesties, without entering upon a minute discussion of the different articles of it, only observed, that with respect to the Parliaments, after the declarations contained in their last resolutions, they could not and ought not to be more than Judges.

“ Would it not be very satisfactory,” added the King, “ if the declaration of the  
“ 23d of June were resorted to?” Count *Alphonse* answered, that the opinion of the  
Emperor



Emperor and his very words were : “ That  
“ the King ought to resume all his autho-  
“ rity, and regulate it himself as he should  
“ judge proper ; with a reasonable confide-  
“ ration of the desires stated in the majority  
“ of the instructions given to the Deputies.  
“ That the King of France had done more  
“ than any other monarch in favour of his  
“ People ; who, in return for his kindness,  
“ had loaded him with outrages.”—“ That  
“ is true,” said the King ; “ nothing of the  
“ kind would have happened if the States-  
“ General had been convoked in 1787, in-  
“ stead of 1789 : but that idea did not  
“ occur to me ; and none of the Ministers  
“ thought of it.”

The King did not deliver his sentiments concerning the last article of the plan ; but the Queen appeared very much dissatisfied with it, and said with warmth : “ We ought  
“ to attempt every thing in order to leave  
“ Paris ; but to go only to the frontiers :  
“ for a King ought never to leave his King-  
“ dom. Confess,” added she, addressing herself to Count *Alphonse*, “ that my bro-  
“ ther was hurt that we employed the Baron  
“ *de Breteuil*. We did it because he was  
“ the only person acquainted with the Court  
“ of



“ of Vienna, where he resided ; and because  
“ he was known to the Prince *de Kaunitz*,  
“ who has so long held the reins there.”  
Several other questions relative to the Count  
*d'Artois* terminated this conversation.

The coalition of the Powers was the principal means proposed by *M. de Montmorin*, and it was formed in execution of his plan, which the King and the Emperor had approved ; but the insurrection of the 18th of April, and the events that followed in consequence, had made his Imperial Majesty think, that as the situation of the King was changed, it was necessary to have recourse to new measures ; and that of uniting the regiments remaining faithful, the emigrants, the nobility, and all the malcontents of the Kingdom, with the foreign armies, appeared to him proper to impress the greater terror, by adding to the fear of a foreign war that of a civil one : but that was precisely what the King most dreaded himself ; and this alone was sufficient to prevent him from participating in any manner in the execution of the plan. On the other hand, their Majesties' impatience to quit Paris was so great, that the advice to *drop the idea of it* could not be agreeable to them. The King therefore did not recall  
the



the orders which he had given to the Marquis *de Bouillé*, in the letter of the 27th of May, and, on different excuses, refused those which *M. de Montmorin* was continually applying for to dispatch to the Baron *de Gilliers*.

Nothing transpired concerning any of these plans during the month of May. The Pope's brief against the civil constitution of the Clergy, and by which his Holiness suspended the Bishop of *Autun* from all his functions, and declared him excommunicated after forty days, if he did not recant his errors, was for several days the topic of the conversations and pamphlets of the Capital.

The request relative to the union of the Comtat of Avignon to France, which had already been twice discussed and rejected by an adjournment of the question, occupied the Assembly during the first Sitzings in May, and was again formally rejected by a decree; in passing which the votes were called, and there appeared 487 against 316, notwithstanding the injury done by the Pope's brief to his most legal interests, and the hopes of the Factious grounded on that circumstance. The eloquence



quence and solid argument with which the Abbé Maury, *M. de Cazalès*, *M. de Clermont Tonnerre* and *M. Malouet* defended the rights of the Holy See, caused the decree proposed by the Committee to be rejected.

The same decree was a second time presented a fortnight afterwards, *as the only means*, said the Reporter (*M. de Menou*), *of extinguishing the torches of fanaticism, and the flame of civil war, which desolated the Comtat, and became daily more bloody.* The question so often debated on this subject was renewed with more violence than ever; nevertheless the issue was the same. The decree was rejected upon a call of the votes; there appearing 374 against 368\*.

The Assembly also consumed several Sitings in the month of May, in discussions concerning the state of persons free, not free, and manumitted in the Colonies, and concluded with decreeing almost unanimously, that no law could be passed on the subject, but upon precise and voluntary proceedings originating in the Colonial Assemblies.—(May 13.)

\* *Avignon* and the *Comtat Venaissin* were not declared integral parts of the French Empire until the decree of the 14th of September following.



The public partook but little in the warmth with which the different parties conducted their debates. Patriotism was visibly cooling, and the Assembly preserved a small remainder of popularity only by frequently speaking of the time of their dissolution, and announcing it as very near at hand. To leave no doubt on this head, they took into consideration the organization of the Legislative Body that was to succeed them; and they decreed, that the Primary Assemblies should be convoked between the 12th and 25th of June following, for the nomination of new Deputies: but the decree by which they acquired the greatest applause at this period, was that which enacted, that no Member in the present Assembly could be returned for the next Legislature. The people were so heartily tired with always seeing the same men in the same place, that their disgust was extended as well to those who had the most enjoyed their favour, as to their antagonists. It was said *to be high time that the National Representation should change countenance*; and this pun expressed the general wish. Nevertheless they were still patient, because the Committees had taken care to announce, that after the criminal code,



code, which had been already discussed in several Sittings, was concluded, the Assembly would have no more to engage them than the municipal code, the code of the police, the national conventions, and the definitive organization of the Executive Power; and that the laws on these subjects would be all finally passed before the end of July.

The Abbé *Raynal*\* could not have chosen a more favourable juncture for sending to the Assembly his famous letter, which was dictated by the grief and alarm he felt on seeing the frightful consequences of those principles, of which he had himself been the most ardent supporter. This composition, the wisest and most valuable that ever came from the pen of the Abbé *Raynal*, was read to the Assembly, and is as follows:

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ On my arrival in this Capital after a  
“ long absence, my heart and my eyes  
“ turned towards you. You would have

\* A philosophical writer, well known by his *History of the Commerce of the Indies*, by his high notions concerning liberty, equality, &c. &c. &c. and by his declamations against the modes of government.

“ seen



“ seen me at the feet of this august Assem-  
“ bly, if my age and infirmities would per-  
“ mit me to speak to you without too great  
“ emotion, on the great things you have  
“ done, and of those still necessary to be  
“ done, to establish on this agitated land  
“ that peace, liberty, and happiness which  
“ it is your intention to procure for us.  
“ Do not think that any who are acquainted  
“ with the indefatigable zeal, talents, know-  
“ ledge, and courage you have displayed in  
“ your immense labours, are deficient in  
“ gratitude; others have told you of it,  
“ others have dwelt upon the title you have  
“ to the esteem of the Nation. For me,  
“ whether you consider me as a citizen  
“ using the right of petitioning, or leaving  
“ free scope to my gratitude, you permit an  
“ old friend of liberty to return what he  
“ owes you for the protection with which  
“ you have honoured him; I beseech you  
“ not to reject useful truths. I have long  
“ dared to speak to Kings of their duty;  
“ suffer me now to speak to the People of  
“ their errors, and to their Representatives  
“ of the dangers which threaten us. I am,  
“ I own to you, deeply afflicted at the  
“ crimes which plunge this Empire into  
VOL. IV. G “ mourning.



“ mourning. Is it true that I am to look back  
“ with horror at myself for being one of  
“ those who, by feeling a noble indignation  
“ against arbitrary power, may perhaps have  
“ furnished arms to licentiousness? Do then  
“ Religion, the Laws, the Royal Authority,  
“ and Public Order, demand back from Phi-  
“ losophy and Reason the ties which united  
“ them to this grand society of the French  
“ Nation, as if by exposing abuses, and  
“ teaching the rights of the People and the  
“ duties of Princes, our criminal efforts had  
“ broken those ties? But no—never have  
“ the bold conceptions of philosophy been  
“ represented by us as the strict rule for  
“ acts of legislation.

“ You cannot justly attribute to us what  
“ could only be the result of a false inter-  
“ pretation of our principles. Alas! now  
“ that I stand upon the brink of the grave;  
“ now that I am about to quit this immense  
“ family whose happiness I have ardently  
“ desired, what do I see around me? Reli-  
“ gious troubles, civil dissensions, conster-  
“ nation on the one hand, tyranny and auda-  
“ city on the other; a Government the  
“ slave of popular tyranny; the sanctuary  
“ of the laws surrounded by unruly men,  
“ who



“ who alternately either dictate or despise  
“ them ; soldiers without discipline ; leaders  
“ without authority ; Ministers without  
“ means ; a King, the first friend of his  
“ People, plunged into bitterness, insulted,  
“ menaced, stripped of all authority, and  
“ the public power no longer existing, but  
“ in Clubs, in which ignorant and rude  
“ men dare to decide all political ques-  
“ tions.” [*Here murmurs broke forth from  
the Côté-Gauche.*]

“ Such, believe me, is the real situation of  
“ France. No other than myself would per-  
“ haps dare to tell it to you ; but *I* dare, be-  
“ cause I ought ; because I am upon the verge  
“ of eighty ;” [*A voice from the Côté-Gauche  
said, So it appears.*—“ Because I cannot  
“ be accused of regretting the ancient sys-  
“ tem ; because, when I bewail the ruined  
“ state of the church of France,” [*Here  
a laugh from the Côté-Gauche.*] “ I can-  
“ not be accused of being a fanatic priest ;  
“ because, in considering the re-establish-  
“ ment of lawful authority as the only  
“ means of safety, I cannot be accused of  
“ being a partisan, or of expecting favours ;  
“ because, in attacking those citizens who



“ have set the Kingdom in flames, and per-  
“ verted the public mind by their writings,  
“ I shall not be accused of undervaluing the  
“ liberty of the press. Alas ! I was full  
“ of hope and joy, when I beheld you lay-  
“ ing the foundations of the public happi-  
“ ness, reforming abuses, proclaiming the  
“ rights of all, and bringing the different  
“ parts of the Empire under the same laws  
“ and a uniform system ; but my eyes over-  
“ flowed with tears, when I beheld the most  
“ wicked of men employing the vilest of  
“ intrigues to fuly the Revolution ; when  
“ I saw the holy name of Patriotism prosti-  
“ tuted to villainy, and licentiousness march-  
“ ing in triumph under the banners of Li-  
“ berty. Dread mingled with my just grief  
“ when I beheld all the springs of Govern-  
“ ment destroyed, and weak barriers substi-  
“ tuted instead of an active and repressing  
“ power. I have looked every where for  
“ the traces of that central authority  
“ which a great Nation places in the hands  
“ of the Monarch for its own safety—but  
“ all in vain. I looked for those prin-  
“ ciples which are the preservers of pro-  
“ perty, and I saw them invaded.” [*Great*  
*murmurs*



*murmurs in the Assembly.*] “ I looked for  
“ the shelter where personal liberty reposes,  
“ and I saw audacity continually increasing,  
“ invoking, awaiting the signal of destruc-  
“ tion, which the Factious, and the Innova-  
“ tors, as dangerous as the Factious, are  
“ ready to give. I heard those insidious  
“ voices that alarm you with false terrors,  
“ in order to turn aside your attention from  
“ real dangers; that inspire you with fatal  
“ distrusts, in order to lead you to destroy,  
“ one after another, all the props of the  
“ Monarchical Government; above all, I  
“ shuddered to observe, in their new state  
“ of existence, this People, who wish to  
“ be free; I saw them not only mistaking  
“ the social virtues, humanity and justice,  
“ the only foundations of real Liberty, but  
“ also receiving with avidity the new seeds  
“ of corruption, and thus suffering themselves  
“ to be fettered with a new chain of slavery.  
“ Alas! what are my sufferings, when in  
“ the heart of the Capital, in the centre of  
“ knowledge, I see this misguided people  
“ welcome, with a ferocious joy, the most  
“ criminal propositions—smile at the reci-  
“ tal of murder, and celebrate their crimes  
“ as conquests!” [*A voice from the Côté-*



*Gauche said, This is one of M. Malouet's reports.]* “ For this people are unacquainted,  
“ that a single crime is the source of infinite  
“ calamities. I see them laugh and dance  
“ upon the brink of a precipice which may  
“ swallow up even hope. This show of joy  
“ is what has most deeply affected me : your  
“ indifference at this dreadful perversion of  
“ the public mind is the first and only cause  
“ of the change which has been wrought  
“ respecting yourselves, of that change by  
“ which corrupted adulations, or murmurs  
“ stifled by fear, have taken place of the  
“ pure homage paid to your first labours ;  
“ but whatever courage I am inspired with  
“ by the knowledge of my last hour being  
“ at hand, however stimulated even by the  
“ love of Liberty to a performance of my  
“ duty, still I feel, in addressing you, that  
“ respect and species of fear, which no man  
“ can throw off when he imagines himself  
“ arguing with the Representatives of a  
“ great people.  
“ Must I stop here, or continue to speak to  
“ you in the name of posterity ? Yes, I think  
“ you worthy of hearing that language. I  
“ have all my life meditated on the ideas  
“ which you have been applying to the rege-  
“ neration



“neration of the Kingdom; I have meditated  
“upon them at a period when, repulsed by  
“every social institution, by every interest,  
“by every prejudice, they had only the al-  
“lurement of a soothing wish. I had then  
“no motive to make the application, or to  
“calculate the effect of the terrible incon-  
“veniences attending factions, when invest-  
“ed with the power that commands men  
“and things, when the resistance of things,  
“and the passions of men, are the elements  
“necessary to be combined; which, in the  
“circumstances and at the time I wrote,  
“I neither could nor ought to evince. The  
“circumstances and the times in which you  
“are acting require you to attend to them,  
“and I think it incumbent upon me to in-  
“form you that you have not done it suf-  
“ficiently.

“By this single, but continued error, you  
“have vitiated your work, you have reduced  
“yourselves to such a situation, that you  
“can only preserve it from total ruin by  
“going back, or marking out this retrograde  
“motion for your successors. Should you  
“fear to encounter alone all the hatred that  
“surrounds the Altar of Liberty, be as-  
“sured, that this heroic sacrifice will not



“ be the least of the consoling reflections  
“ you will lay up for yourselves. What  
“ men must they be, who, leaving their  
“ country all the good they have been able  
“ to do it, reserve to themselves solely the  
“ reproaches due to real and serious evils,  
“ but of which they can accuse only events?  
“ I think you worthy of so exalted a def-  
“ tiny, and that idea encourages me to point  
“ out to you unreservedly the defects which  
“ you have introduced into the French  
“ Constitution.

“ Called upon to regenerate France, you  
“ ought in the first place to have considered  
“ what you could preserve of the old order,  
“ and, moreover, what you could not give  
“ up. France was a Monarchy : its ex-  
“ tent, its wants, its manners, the National  
“ spirit, are inseparable bars to the admission  
“ of Republican forms into it, without ef-  
“ fecting the total dissolution of the Em-  
“ pire. The Monarchical power was vi-  
“ tiated from two causes : its foundation  
“ was surrounded with prejudices, and its  
“ limits were marked only by partial resist-  
“ ance. To refine the principles by fixing  
“ the Throne upon its true basis, the Sove-  
“ reignty of the Nation ; and to settle the  
“ limits,



“ limits, by placing them in the National  
“ Representation, were what you had to do.  
“ You think you have done it ! But in or-  
“ ganizing the two powers, the strength  
“ and success of the Constitution depend on  
“ their balance. You had only to guard  
“ against the present bias of ideas. You  
“ must have seen that in public opinion the  
“ power of Kings was declining, and the  
“ rights of the People increasing. By  
“ weakening without measure what is al-  
“ ready tending naturally to decay, and  
“ strengthening in its source what is natu-  
“ rally tending to increase, you are drawn  
“ forcibly to this sad issue ; a King with-  
“ out authority, and a People without con-  
“ trol. It was by delivering yourselves up  
“ to the distractions of opinion that you se-  
“ conded the influence of the multitude, and  
“ established popular elections without end.  
“ Have you not forgotten that frequent  
“ elections unceasingly renewed, and the  
“ short duration of powers, are causes which  
“ relax the political springs ? Have you not  
“ forgotten that the form of Government  
“ ought to bear a just proportion between  
“ the protectors and protected ? You have  
“ preserved



“ preserved the name of King, but in your  
“ Constitution he is no longer useful, he is  
“ even dangerous. You have reduced his  
“ influence to that which corruption may  
“ usurp; you have in a manner invited him  
“ to oppose a Constitution which incessantly  
“ shews him what he is not, and what he  
“ might be. This then is a vice inherent  
“ in your Constitution; a vice which will  
“ destroy it, if you or your successors do not  
“ hasten to root it out.

“ I will not speak to you of the faults  
“ which may be attributed to circum-  
“ stances—you perceive them yourselves;  
“ but how can you suffer the evil which  
“ you may destroy, to remain? After hav-  
“ ing declared the right of the liberty of  
“ religious opinions, how can you suffer  
“ priests to be oppressed with persecutions  
“ and outrages?” [*A movement of indig-  
nation was manifested by the Côté-Gauche.*]

“ After having consecrated the principles of  
“ individual liberty, how can you suffer a  
“ Constitution to exist in your bosom,  
“ which serves as a model and pretext for  
“ all the subaltern inquisitions that a fac-  
“ tious apprehension has erected in every  
“ part



“ part of the Empire ? How is it that you  
“ are not alarmed at the audacity and suc-  
“ cess of the writers who profane the name  
“ of patriot ? You have a Monarchical Go-  
“ vernment, and they cause it to be detested.  
“ You wish the liberty of the People, and  
“ they wish to make the People a most fe-  
“ rocious tyrant. You wish to regenerate  
“ morals, and they command the triumph  
“ of vice and the impunity of crimes.

“ I will not speak to you of your mea-  
“ sures of finance. God forbid that I should  
“ increase alarm, or diminish hope ! The  
“ public fortune is still in your hands ; but  
“ be well assured that neither taxes, credit,  
“ receipt or expences are certain, where the  
“ Government is neither powerful nor re-  
“ spected. What kind of Government could  
“ resist this predominant influence of Clubs ?  
“ You have destroyed the corporations, and  
“ yet the most colossal of all associations  
“ rises over your heads, and threatens to  
“ dissolve all the powers. France is now  
“ divided into two very distinct classes ;  
“ that of honest moderate men, who are at  
“ present mute and dismayed ; and violent  
“ spirits, who attract each other, unite, and  
“ compose a formidable volcano, which  
“ ejects



“ ejects a lava of terrors capable of burying  
“ all. You have published a declaration of  
“ rights, and that declaration is perfect, if  
“ you disengage it from metaphysical ab-  
“ stractions, which only tend to spread  
“ through the French Empire the seeds of  
“ disorganization and disorder. Incessantly  
“ hesitating between principles which you  
“ are prevented from modifying, and cir-  
“ cumstances which force exceptions from  
“ you, you do very little for the public  
“ good, and too much for your doctrine.—  
“ You are often wavering and impolitic, at  
“ the moment when you wish to be neither.  
“ You see that none of these observations  
“ escape the friends of Liberty. They de-  
“ mand back from you the deposit of the  
“ public opinion, of which you are but  
“ the organs. Europe is looking on you  
“ with astonishment; Europe, which may  
“ be shaken to its very foundations, by the  
“ propagation of your principles, is enraged  
“ at their exaggeration. The silence of its  
“ Princes may perhaps be owing to dread.  
“ But do not aspire to the fatal honour of  
“ rendering yourselves formidable, by im-  
“ moderate innovations, as dangerous to  
“ yourselves as to your neighbours! Once  
“ more



“ more open the annals of the world, call  
“ to your aid the wisdom of ages, and see  
“ how many Empires have perished by  
“ anarchy.

“ It is time to put an end to that  
“ which distracts us; to stop vengeance,  
“ sedition, and mutiny, and to restore peace  
“ and confidence. To attain this salutary  
“ end you have but one means, and that is,  
“ by a revision of your decrees to re-unite  
“ and strengthen the powers weakened by  
“ their being separated, to grant to the  
“ King all the force necessary to secure the  
“ authority of the Laws, and, above all, to  
“ secure the liberty of the Primary Assem-  
“ blies, from which the Factionous have  
“ driven all virtuous and wise citizens.”—

*[Here some of the Assembly applauded and some murmured.]*

“ Do you think that the  
“ re-establishment of the Executive Power  
“ can be the work of your successors? No;  
“ they will assemble with less force than  
“ you possess: they will have to gain that  
“ popular opinion which you have disposed  
“ of. You alone can create again what you  
“ have destroyed, or suffered to be destroyed.  
“ You fixed the basis of a rational Consti-  
“ tution,



“ tution, by securing to the People the right  
“ of making laws, and granting taxes.—  
“ Anarchy will annihilate these very rights,  
“ if you do not place them under the  
“ guard of an active and vigorous Govern-  
“ ment ; and despotism awaits you, if you  
“ do not prevent it by the tutelary protec-  
“ tion of the Royal Authority.

“ I have collected all my strength to speak  
“ the austere language of truth to you. Par-  
“ don my zeal, and attribute to the love of  
“ my country, whatever appears too free in  
“ my remonstrances, and be assured of my  
“ ardent wishes for your glory, as well as  
“ of my profound respect.

“ (Signed)

“ WILLIAM THOMAS RAYNAL.”

The Assembly heard this letter read to the end ; but it was often interrupted by violent murmurs and gross insults, sometimes directed against the author, and sometimes against *M. Malouet*, the similarity of whose opinions with those expressed in the letter raised a suspicion of his having composed, or at least suggested this vehement censure of the Revolution and of the whole conduct



conduct of the Assembly. The President (*Bureau de Puzy*) was highly blamed for allowing it to be read, and it was proposed that he should be called to order; but he said in his justification, that before he had given the letter to be read he had informed them that the Abbé *Raynal* did not spare the faults which he thought they had committed; and that he, the President, thought himself the less authorised to withhold it, as the Abbé *Raynal* had announced his intention to print it. *Robespierre* attempted to prove, that this letter would produce upon the public an effect quite contrary to what was expected. “This Constitution then,” said he, “must be highly favourable to the  
“ People, and very fatal to tyranny, since  
“ such extraordinary means are employed to  
“ decry it. It is attacking Liberty to de-  
“ nounce to the world as the crimes of  
“ Frenchmen, these commotions, these  
“ struggles, which are so natural a crisis to  
“ Liberty, that, without this crisis, despotism  
“ and slavery would be incurable. We will  
“ not resign ourselves to the alarms attempt-  
“ ed to be raised. The Assembly have done  
“ themselves honour by hearing the letter  
“ read.



“ read. It only remains for them to pass,  
“ with equal dignity, to the order of the  
“ day.” This motion, every sentence of  
which was loudly applauded by the *Coté-  
Gauche*, was adopted, after a short debate.  
But the public were not of *Robespierre’s*  
opinion respecting the Abbé *Raynal’s* letter.  
On the contrary, it made the greatest im-  
pression, and contributed not a little to in-  
crease the discredit of the Assembly.

*M. de Montmorin*, still pursuing the exe-  
cution of his plan, neglected nothing in or-  
der to turn all these circumstances to the  
King’s advantage. To this end he employed  
several private agents in the Sections and in  
the National Guard, under the direction of a  
Mr. M——, and they often made him pay  
very dear for doing nothing, under the title  
of *secret services*. This is an almost un-  
avoidable evil in every measure of this kind;  
but, when compelled to it, it should be em-  
ployed only for services that may be proved,  
and which should never be paid for till per-  
formed. The zeal of *M. Montmorin* was  
not confined to these obscure and uncertain  
means. At this period he took a step still  
more energetic than any he had taken be-  
fore,



fore, and its success was as complete as he could wish. The following was the occasion of it :

A journalist had inserted in his paper \* of the 31st of May, a pretended letter from Franckfort, containing the following paragraph :

“ I have in my hands at this moment true copies of two counter-letters, sent at the same time with the declaration to the Ambassadors, the effect of which they were meant to annul, and which they have entirely counteracted. It is stated, that for a short time the King had submitted to the laws of necessity ; that it was requisite to have recourse to this expedient, in the first place, in order to secure his life, and in the next, to lull distrust, and to seize the moment when it was laid asleep to resume those measures of precaution recently disconcerted. The meaning of the last words, which we collected from the same source, a few days ago, is this :—The excursion to St. Cloud, which was prevented, was not to end at two

\* The *Moniteur*, No. 151.



leagues from Paris, it was to have extended the following night to Compiègne, and thence to Brussels. A manifesto was then to proclaim to Europe, that the King had just escaped from a long and painful captivity; that foreseeing the evils which would result from this departure, to the faithful part of the Nation, when it should be known by those who mislead the People, it was deferred, but it became necessary, as soon as the King found himself on the point of being forced to a kind of abjuration of the religion of his fathers, by receiving the communion, at a period which it observes the most solemnly, from a pretended pastor whom the church did not acknowledge.

“ At the same time the Pope’s Brief was to have been profusely distributed throughout all the Departments. The most extensive hopes were placed upon the concurrence of Religious and Monarchical fanaticism, and upon the determination to be published by the different despots. These details may be depended upon—they come from the Tuileries; twice have I seen the original letters. You may suppose that there are no  
2 signatures



signatures to these missions, but I know that they come from one of the most active agents of a great Aristocratical personage, who has given him a considerable part in the direction of the Department reserved for *diplo-matic treason*."

*M. de Montmorin* immediately denounced this article of the *Moniteur* to the Assembly in a letter conceived in these terms:

" Mr. President, it would be a difficult task, and even an absurd one, to attempt answering the calumnies daily spread in some of the journals with which we are deluged. The wisest and certainly the easiest way would be to leave these calumnies to the contempt which awaits them, when the calm, which their principal object is to keep at a distance, shall permit the appreciating of them according to their just value: but nevertheless, when those calumnies are of a nature to alarm the whole Nation; when they tend to create suspicions the most unjust and the most injurious, concerning the intentions of the Royal Family; when we



find them introduced into a journal which had not hitherto been confounded with those which appeared to have no other end than that of agitating the People, misleading them, and exciting them to excesses; when, I say, so many circumstances are found united, it becomes my duty, as a servant of the Public, and as Minister to the King, to contradict, in the most public manner, what malice invents and spreads, and what mistrust is but too ready to receive in the present circumstances. I think it then incumbent upon me to lay before the Assembly an article inserted in the 151st Number of the *Moniteur*.

“ The precaution taken by the editor to conceal the name of his correspondent is a sufficient proof of the calumny; but this reflection, obvious as it is, is not perhaps enough at this moment. I attest, therefore, on my responsibility, on my head, on my honour, that the project, which the writer of this article does not blush to ascribe to the King, never existed. Alas! were the cares and the vigilance of his Majesty known in every particular, they would be found of a very different nature.

“ In



“ In regard to the counter-letters, which seems to concern me personally, if I had been named by the *Moniteur*, and it depends on its author to name me, I would immediately have prosecuted the printer. The author of the article should be compelled to come forward, and I think that I should give a proof of my respect for the liberty of the press, by demanding that he should be punished for defamation. It is time to consider as enemies to the public those, who, incessantly deceiving the people, in order to agitate them, create real dangers among us, by continually talking of fictitious ones.

“ I am, &c.

“ P. S. I have this instant, Mr. President, laid this letter before the King, and his Majesty not only permits, but has ordered me to send it to you, and to request you to communicate it to the National Assembly.”

This letter received repeated and loud applause. The Assembly ordered it to be printed, and inserted in the journals. It was even proposed by several, that the pub-



lic accuser should be ordered to prosecute the printer of the *Moniteur* to compel him to discover the author of the denounced article, and it was not till after a long debate that the Assembly passed to the order of the day.

The pretended letter from Franckfort had certainly no reference to the plan in which *M. de Montmorin* was engaged; but he would not, perhaps, have dared to contradict it in such positive terms, if he had known the project for the King's departure to Montmedy; some of the circumstances of which appear to touch near enough upon the plan announced in the letter of the *Moniteur*, to give grounds for presuming that some indiscretion had been committed. Be that as it may, *M. de Montmorin's* letter removed all suspicions, because he was known to be the Minister in whom the King placed most confidence.

The place of Minister of the Marine, vacant by the resignation of *M. de Fleurieu*, was offered to me in the beginning of May. On my declining it, *M. Thevenard* was appointed on the 17th of the same month; and



and on the 28th *M. de Lessart*, who was both Minister of the Interior and of Public Contributions, having resigned the latter department, the King nominated to it *M. Tarbé*, first clerk of the Tax department.

If the King's intentions gave no more uneasiness, it was otherwise with those of the Emigrants. Their immense number; their assembling; their motions upon the frontiers; their supposed plan of forming an army under the command of the Prince *de Condé*, and the attempts made to bring over to them some regiments of the French army, announced dispositions the more alarming, as at that period several symptoms of insurrection were manifested in the Interior, which were thought to have been excited by the emissaries of the Emigrants. Under these circumstances the Assembly, on the addresses of a great many Departments and Municipalities, urging them to take prompt and efficacious measures for the safety of the Kingdom, took this important subject into consideration, in the Sitting of the 11th of June, upon the report of five Commit-



tees united \*. A debate first took place, on a motion for disbanding all the Officers of the army ; but it was rejected almost unanimously. A new oath more circumstantial than the former was prescribed for the Officers of every rank, under penalty of losing their commissions ; but the most remarkable articles in the decree which was passed related to the Prince of *Condé*. They ran thus :

“ The National Assembly decree, that the  
“ President shall, in the course of the day,  
“ wait upon the King, and request him to  
“ notify, with all possible dispatch, to  
“ *Louis-Joseph-Bourbon-Condé*, that his  
“ residence near the frontier of the King-  
“ dom, surrounded by persons whose inten-  
“ tions were notoriously suspected, an-  
“ nounced guilty plans.

“ That within fifteen days, to be reck-  
“ oned from the day of the notification of  
“ this declaration, *Louis-Joseph-Bourbon-*

\* The Committees of the Constitution, the Diplomatic and Military Committees, and those of Reports and Inquiry.

“ *Condé*



“ *Condé* should be held bound to return in-  
“ to the Kingdom, or to withdraw from  
“ the frontiers ; in the latter case, formally  
“ declaring that he would never undertake  
“ any thing against the Constitution  
“ decreed by the National Assembly, and  
“ accepted by the King, or against the  
“ tranquillity of the State ; and in default  
“ of his returning into the Kingdom, or  
“ of his withdrawing, and making the  
“ above declaration, within fifteen days af-  
“ ter the notification, the National Assem-  
“ bly declare him a rebel, and that he for-  
“ feits all right to the Crown ; and they  
“ decree, that all his property shall be se-  
“ questrated ; that every French Citizen,  
“ without exception, shall be forbid-  
“ den all correspondence and communica-  
“ tion with him or his accomplices and  
“ adherents, under penalty of being pro-  
“ secuted, and punished as a traitor to his  
“ country ; and in the case of his entering  
“ in arms upon the territory of France,  
“ they enjoin every Citizen to fall upon  
“ him and seize his person, as well as the  
“ persons of his accomplices and adhe-  
“ rents ; and they make him also respon-  
“ sible



“ fible for all the hostile movements which  
“ may be directed against France upon the  
“ frontiers.”

The Committees in their report had reckoned in the number of the principal causes which agitated the public mind in the Interior, the protests of the Bishops, and of Clergymen removed from their fees and benefices, and the mandates and pastoral letters suspending the Constitutional Priests. In fact, in support of this denunciation, there was a criminal prosecution instituted at St. Germain-en-Laye against the Cardinal *de la Rochefoucault*, and two letters produced, which he had written to two priests of his diocese to suspend them from the exercise of their functions, and which he had notified to the churchwardens of the parishes where those priests were established. The Committee of Reports gave an account of this affair on the 18th of June, in the Evening Sitting, and concluded with proposing, that the Cardinal *de la Rochefoucault* should be cited to declare, whether he was the author of the letter in question or not. The Abbé *Maury* immediately ascended the Tribune,  
and



and strove for a long time in vain to be heard. In the midst of the tumult, and before the proposed citation was put to the vote, the Cardinal *de la Rochefoucault* rose and said, with his usual candour and serenity : “ I declare, that I wrote the letters which you have just heard, and I am persuaded that the copies which have been read to you are conformable to the original.” Upon this declaration, the reporter proposed, in the name of the Committee, to decree, that there were grounds for an impeachment of the Cardinal *de la Rochefoucault*.

The Duke *de Liancourt*, as a relation of the Cardinal's, was the first to speak in his defence ; but he did it with more zeal than dignity. He endeavoured to prove, by a comparison of dates, that the installation of the new Bishops of *Rouen* and of *Verfailles* had taken place so few days before the letters of the Cardinal, that he might have been unacquainted with it at the time he had written, and he was authorised by the decrees to continue provisionally his functions till he had notice of his being suspended. The Abbé *Maury* and *M. de Cazalès*, who spoke  
after



after the Duke *de Liancourt*, disdained this petty quirk. They did not think it sufficient to prove that the Cardinal *de la Rochefoucault* had committed an excusable error; they maintained, that his conduct in this circumstance had been dictated by his duty, and that there was no more in it than the exercise of the spiritual authority, of which the temporal power could not divest him, for it was not from the temporal power that he had received it. But the strongest argument in favour of the Cardinal was the consideration he had acquired from eighty years accumulation of virtues. What stupid effrontery, in fact, was it to dare to think, that a venerable Prelate, whom the Nation had been so long in the habit of respecting, could be considered as guilty of treason against it! and yet, nevertheless, the priority was granted to the motion offered by the Committee, and even the decree for impeachment appeared to be adopted by a considerable majority, and was pronounced by the President; but upon the warm and persevering remonstrances of the members of the *Coté-Droit*, the votes were called over, and the result was, that there appeared



peared 286 votes against 271, in favour of a declaration that there were no grounds for impeaching the Cardinal *de la Rochefoucault*.



## CHAPTER XLI.

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*Departure of the King and Royal Family for Montmedy—Measures taken by the Assembly—Conduct of the Ministers—M. de Montmorin besieged in his House by the Populace—Embarrassment of M. de la Fayette—The Constitutional Party declare in his Favour—The Assembly, encouraged by the Testimonies of Submission which they receive, assume a firm Countenance—Declaration written with the King's own Hand, and presented to the Assembly by the Intendant of the Civil List—M. de Rochambeau, M. d'Affry, and several Staff Officers of the Swiss Guards present themselves at the Bar, and promise Submission and Fidelity to the Assembly—Addresses and Deputations on the Occasion—The Assembly order Seals to*



*to be put on all the Houses and Buildings dependent on the Civil List—New Form of an Oath in which the King is not named—State of the Capital—Details relative to the King's Journey, and his Arrest at Varennes—Decrees of the Assembly on this Occasion—Exultation of the Factious—M. de la Fayette, at the Head of the National Guard, presents himself at the Bar, followed by several thousand Citizens of all Classes; they are all admitted to take the new Oath.*

THE Marquis *de Bouillé*, having been informed by the King himself that the day of his Majesty's departure for Montmedy was finally fixed for the 19th of June, between midnight and one in the morning, had in consequence prepared all the measures necessary to ensure the escape of the Royal Family. Several detachments of troops, which were to be stationed upon the road from Chalons to Montmedy, were already upon their march to their respective posts, when another letter from the King, received by *M. de Bouillé* on the 15th of June, informed him that their Majesties' departure was



was put off for four-and-twenty hours; and that the Marquis *d'Agoult*, who was to have had a seat in their coach, could not attend them on their journey, because *Madame de Tourzel*, Governess to the Children of France, was not willing to give up her right of accompanying them.

This delay, which kept the detachments at their different posts four-and-twenty hours longer than was intended, was the more vexatious, as it could not but augment the suspicions which had been manifested, and particularly in the small town of Clermont in Argonne, on the arrival of two squadrons which had been stationed there. Nor did it decrease *M. de Bouillé's* anxiety to hear that the Marquis *d'Agoult*, in whose attachment, intrepidity and energy, he had placed great confidence, was not to accompany the King. It would surely have been easy to convince *Madame de Tourzel*, that however laudable her motives were, the danger to which her claim would expose the King and Royal Family, if admitted, should prevent her insisting upon it. The cause of the delay of the journey to Montmedy might as easily have been avoided. In fact, it is known  
that



that their Majesties only deferred their departure till a chamber-maid, whose fidelity they suspected, had finished her week. It would have been better to have discharged her a month before. If that step, from which no inconvenience could have arisen, appeared too severe, some means could easily have been found to have sent her out of the way on the 19th of June, without any suspicion of the motive: some confidential commission, with which she would have been flattered, might have been given to her that day. But unhappily it is not upon a throne that the necessity of precautions is learned, nor of course the nicety and attention required in the minutest of them when they may concur in the success of a delicate enterprise. The long habit which Kings are in of seeing things succeed according to their wishes, without considering the means of execution, leads them to view all with the same eye. Hence that fatal security, that kind of carelessness with which *Louis XVI.* was charged, and which has so often made his most faithful servants despair.

On the night between the 20th and 21st of June their Majesties separately left the Palace of the Tuilleries, passing through the



Duke *de Villequiers*' apartments between twelve and one o'clock. The Queen and *Madame Elizabeth*, as they entered the *Carouzel*, saw *M. de la Fayette* crossing the square. Two common coaches waited for the Royal Family upon the Quay of the Theatins. Their Majesties walked to the place, left Paris without any obstacle, and took the road to Montmedy by Chalons on the Marne. MONSIEUR and MADAME set out an hour afterwards from the Palace of the Luxembourg, and took the road of Valenciennes.

On the 21st of June, at the opening of the Sitting, the President announced to the Assembly, with an air of the deepest consternation, that *M. Bailly* had just informed him that the King and a part of the Royal Family had been carried off in the night by the enemies of the public. At this unexpected news the dead silence of stupor reigned throughout the Hall, and lasted for some time. The different parties, all equally fearing to be the first to manifest the impression which this event made upon them, stared round, endeavouring to penetrate into one another's thoughts. Silence was at length broken by *Regnaut de St. Jean d'Angely*, a Deputy



a Deputy of the *Tiers-Etat*, of middling talents, but a Member of the *Coté-Gauche*, and consequently siding with the Constitutional Party and that of the Jacobins. He first spoke of the courage, coolness, and tranquillity which the Assembly must display to save the empire on this occasion, as they had saved it by the same means two years ago, after the Royal Sitting of the 23d of June. He then proposed to order the Minister of the Interior to dispatch couriers immediately into all the departments, with an order to all public functionaries, national guards, and troops of the line, to arrest, or cause to be arrested, every person leaving the Kingdom, as well as all effects, arms, ammunition, horses, carriages, gold and silver coin, &c. &c.: and in case the couriers should overtake the King, or any of the Royal Family, or those concerned in carrying them off, the said public functionaries, national guards, and troops of the line should be directed to take the promptest measures to prevent the King and Royal Family from continuing their journey.

This motion was decreed by acclamation. Several others were afterwards made at once, and produced some moments of tumult,



notwithstanding the repeated efforts of the President, and most of the speakers, to recall the Assembly to the dignity and serenity which they had shown after the Royal Sitting of the 23d of June 1789. At this moment a numerous mob was said to be coming from the *Pont-Royal* towards the Assembly, with an intention to enter into the Hall. *Camus*, frightened, represented that the most urgent concern was to secure the tranquillity of the deliberations of the Assembly; and moved, that the first thing done should be to order the Commanders of the public force instantly to employ a sufficient guard to prevent any persons whatever, except the Deputies, from entering the Hall. This motion was much applauded, and unanimously adopted. *Chapelier* then proposed, that the Members of the department of Paris and the Municipal Officers should be ordered to inform the citizens, by a general proclamation, that the Assembly were going to proceed with the greatest dispatch, and without breaking up, to secure order throughout the Empire, so that it might not be disturbed by the King's departure. This motion was also decreed; and before ten o'clock in the



the morning the proclamation of the Municipality was stuck up in all the streets.

*Camus* moved, that the Ministers should be sent for to the Assembly ; and *Charles de Lameth*, that *M. de Rochambeau*, Commander in Flanders, should receive orders to set off immediately for that frontier, as it was the most exposed. A third Member proposed, that the Assembly should give immediate orders that the heaviest artillery of Paris should be fired off every ten minutes as signals of alarm ; and that the couriers who were going to set out should carry orders on their road for firing at stated distances a similar alarm. This motion was at first very much applauded ; but the fear of the effects which so general an alarm might occasion, caused the measure to be rejected. Fear at first had evidently seized the majority of the Members of the *Coté-Gauche* : it was not so with those of the *Coté-Droit*. Their seriousness and silence showed that they were uneasy as to the issue of this crisis ; but a ray of hope was also seen to pierce through that uneasiness.

An Aid-de-Camp of *M. de la Fayette's* (*M. de Romeuf*) presented himself at the bar, and stated, that having received an order



from the General, which enjoined him to set off immediately to inform all good citizens that the King had been carried off by the enemies of the public, and to order them to use every means to oppose his departure; he was going to execute this order, but the workmen employed at the foot of the *Pont Louis XVI.* had pulled him off his horse, and had treated him very ill, and that they had used in the same manner one of his comrades who was still in their hands, and for whom he implored the protection of the Assembly. The President was authorised to add to the order given by *M. de la Fayette* to *M. Romeuf*, a particular order from the Assembly, and to send two of their Members with a tipstaff to rescue the Officer who had been stopped, and to enable him to continue his journey. At the same moment it was announced, that *M. de la Fayette* was arrested by the people at the *Grève*; and the President was authorised by acclamation to send six Commissioners to rescue and bring him to the Assembly. “I beg the National Assembly,” said *Rewbell*, “to preserve the courage which they have always shown. *M. de la Fayette* will shortly be here. I beg the President to ask him whether for several

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“ several weeks past the Officers on guard  
 “ had not received an order not to let the  
 “ King go out after midnight. An Officer  
 “ who says he was on guard declares, that  
 “ he had received that order. It was cer-  
 “ tainly founded on something; and it is  
 “ right to know upon what.” The speaker,  
 interrupted by violent murmurs from the  
*Coté-Gauche*, began to answer the interrup-  
 tion thus: “ I think, Gentlemen, you are  
 “ afraid :”—but new murmurs prevented his  
 continuing. *Barnave* then spoke, and re-  
 presented that it was of the utmost moment  
 to attach popular confidence to those who  
 deserved it, in order to have a centre of exe-  
 cution, and to put the public force in a  
 state to act. He extolled the patriotism of  
*M. de la Fayette*, who, he said, deserved and  
 ought to have every confidence. He re-  
 moved the suspicions which *Rewbell's* mo-  
 tion might have created; and concluded with  
 moving, that the citizens should be ordered  
 to keep themselves armed, but to wait per-  
 fectly silent and motionless till the Repre-  
 sentatives of the Nation should have occasion  
 to call them into action, and should im-  
 press upon them that which they should  
 follow. This motion was generally ap-



plauded. It was scarcely decreed, when they heard that *M. de Cazalès* was arrested by the people, and that his life was in danger. The Assembly showed the same concern for him as they had done for *M. de la Fayette*; six Commissioners were immediately sent to deliver him. Their number would have been much more considerable if the President had named all who requested to go.

The Ministers of Justice, of the Interior, of War, of the Marine, and of the Public Contributions, appeared successively at the bar, and were introduced into the middle of the Hall. Before they were heard the Assembly proceeded, on the motion of *Chapelier*, to draw up into form the different motions already admitted, and passed the following decree:

“ The National Assembly declare to the  
“ citizens of Paris, and to all the inhabitants  
“ of the Empire, that the same firmness  
“ which they have shewn in the midst of  
“ all the difficulties which have accompa-  
“ nied their labours, shall direct their deli-  
“ berations on the occasion of the carrying  
“ off of the King and Royal Family; they  
“ inform all the citizens, that the main-  
“ tenance



“ tenance of the Constitution and safety of  
 “ the Empire never more imperiously re-  
 “ quired good order and public tranquillity ;  
 “ that the National Assembly have taken  
 “ the most active measures to discover those  
 “ who have been guilty of carrying off the  
 “ King and Royal Family ; that they shall,  
 “ without interruption in their Sitzings, em-  
 “ ploy every measure for preventing the  
 “ public from suffering by this event. That  
 “ all the citizens ought entirely to leave to  
 “ them the cares which the safety of the  
 “ Empire requires : and that whatever may  
 “ excite disturbances, alarm individuals, or  
 “ menace property, will be the more guilty,  
 “ as by such proceedings liberty and the  
 “ constitution would be endangered.

“ They ordain, that the citizens of Paris  
 “ should hold themselves in readiness to act  
 “ for the maintenance of public order, and  
 “ the defence of the country, according to  
 “ the orders which shall be given them  
 “ pursuant to the decrees of the National  
 “ Assembly.

“ They ordain, that the Magistrates of  
 “ the Department, and the Municipal Of-  
 “ ficers, should immediately cause this decree  
 “ to be published, and that they attend to  
 “ the



“ the preservation of the public tran-  
“ quillity.”

*M. de Lessart*, whose part it was, as Minister of the Interior, to cause this decree and all those already passed to be promulgated, obtained leave to speak, and requested the Assembly to join two of their Members with him, that he might concert with them the measures which the execution of the decrees might require: but the impossibility of reconciling responsibility with inviolability caused this request to be rejected.

The Minister of Justice solicited a decision to authorise him to seal the decrees: for, having received the Seal from the King's hands without any interference of the Assembly, nothing now but an act of the sovereign will of the Nation could authorise him to affix the Seal without the King's consent, and indeed contrary to his orders: “ For,” added he, “ *M. de la Porte* shewed me this morning a memorial written with the  
“ King's own hand, concluding with a  
“ postscript, in which his Majesty forbids  
“ his Ministers to sign any order in his  
“ name before they receive farther direc-  
“ tions from him; and in which he enjoins  
“ me



“ me to send him the State Seal when required on his part.”

The Assembly deliberating on this request, and upon the different motions which it suggested, decreed, that provisionally, and until it should be otherwise ordained, their decrees should be put in execution by the Ministers; that the Minister of Justice is enjoined to sign them and affix the State Seal to them; that there shall be no occasion for the King's sanction or acceptance; and that the said decree shall preserve the title of law.

This deliberation was interrupted by the reading of a letter written by *M. de Montmorin* to the Minister of Justice, to let him know that he was blocked up in his own house by the People. The Assembly immediately charged their President to give the necessary orders that *M. de Montmorin* might come in safety to join his colleagues, whom they authorised to assemble in the Hotel of the State Seal (the Chancery), to deliberate, and to sign proclamations, and all other acts of administration. They decreed at the same time, that *M. de la Porte* should be immediately ordered to attend at the bar, to acquaint the Assembly with the memorial left by the King.



At that moment *M. Bailly* and *M. de la Fayette*, who had been long impatiently expected, entered the Assembly. *M. de la Fayette* going to place himself by the side of *Camus*, received a cross brutal reception from him. "Let us have no regimentals here," said he, rising with fury; "we ought to see no regimentals in this Assembly." This savage insult could not be very encouraging to *M. de la Fayette*, who, and with reason, was not yet much at ease. Several of his friends rising together went and sat by him, murmuring violently against *Camus*; who, far from being disconcerted by it, maintained that *M. de la Fayette* ought only to be considered as Commander of the National Guard. "He only attends here," added he, "to give us an account of his conduct." The cries several times repeated of, *To the Bar! To the Bar!* supported this observation; and notwithstanding the civil explanation of the President, who endeavoured to prove to *Camus*, that the decree which forbade deliberating in regimentals was not applicable to the present circumstances, *M. de la Fayette* went, as well as *M. Bailly*, and sat with the Ministers on chairs placed before the bar.



*Adrien Duport* then rose to speak in the name of the Commission sent to the Municipality, and reported, that they had remarked in the People, in the midst of the profound grief painted on all countenances, and which was the necessary result of circumstances, a disposition to peace and union, and a full and entire confidence in the National Assembly. “ We did not find,” added he, “ the public “ tranquillity disturbed by any cry, by any “ wrangling. We personally received in our “ way, as Members of the National Assem- “ bly, multiplied testimonies of respect and “ confidence. We think we can assure “ you, that you may with security take “ the measures that your patriotism and your “ prudence shall suggest, and that you may “ depend upon being seconded by the cou- “ rage and zeal of all the citizens. On no “ occasion perhaps have they shown a greater “ attachment to the Assembly.”

This report was confirmed by the messages which the President every minute received from the different sections of Paris, and by the testimonies of confidence and submission given by their Deputations to the Committee appointed to receive them. Thus the Assembly, having their fears of the dangers in which



which so serious a crisis might have involved them fully removed, beheld without dread the height at which they found themselves placed; and from that moment maintained themselves there in an attitude truly noble and commanding.

When *Adrien Duport* had finished his speech, *M. de la Fayette* moved, that the National Assembly should admit to their bar the Officer of the National Guard charged with the guard at the Tuileries the preceding night, and hear his account of some circumstances relative to the great crime which had been committed. “I take upon myself alone,” added he, “all the responsibility of an Officer, whose zeal and patriotism are as well known to me as my own. Permit me also to say, that the dispositions shown by the National Guard are to me the greatest proof that the French People are worthy of liberty, and that nothing can deprive them of it\*.”

\* Poor *M. de la Fayette* had not yet very clear ideas of liberty, and was no better judge of people worthy of it. Experience must have taught him, that a Nation never returns from licentiousness to liberty, without passing through despotism; and that passage may be a long one.

The



The Officer (*M. de Gouvion*) introduced at the bar reported, that on Saturday the 11th of June, Whitsun-eve, a Commander of a battalion of the National Guard came to him and informed him, that there were appearances in the Palace of the Tuileries which indicated an intention in the Queen to go away, and to take with her the *Dauphin* and *Madame Royale*, and he said that he received this information from a confidential person, a lady, whom he named; that the following day this Commander introduced him to that person, who said there was a gallery communicating with the apartment formerly *M. de Villequiers*', through which it was the Queen's intention to escape, and that double keys to the doors of that apartment were already made. "We  
 " went," continued he, " and gave an account of this to the Commander-in-Chief, who ordered us to redouble our  
 " vigilance. Under different pretences I  
 " kept at my house twenty Officers of the  
 " National Guard, who were charged to  
 " walk all night in the courts and in the  
 " garden. The four following days our information was confirmed to me with more  
 " circumstantial particulars. The King had  
 " never



“ never been mentioned to me on this occa-  
“ sion, but only the Queen and the Dauphin.  
“ I can prove that I had always five Officers  
“ of the National Guard, who were parti-  
“ cularly charged to watch *M. de Ville-*  
“ *quier's* door, which I was told was that  
“ through which the Queen was to pass.—  
“ On Friday, the brother of the person who  
“ had given us the information, came to  
“ my house and confirmed every particular.  
“ I told him that I had promised his sister  
“ to be secret, and I begged him to entreat  
“ her to absolve me from my promise, that  
“ I might communicate the circumstance to  
“ the Mayor, that he might take the necessary  
“ precautions. I did not see this lady after-  
“ wards. On Saturday evening, a Volunteer  
“ Grenadier of the National Guard came to  
“ my house, and told me that he had just left  
“ the Committee of Inquiry, where he had  
“ made a declaration to *M. de Sillery*, and  
“ which I found was word for word what  
“ I had been told. I went the following  
“ day to *M. de la Fayette's* and to the  
“ Mayor's, to communicate to them the de-  
“ nunciation which had been made to the  
“ Committee of Inquiry, and according to  
“ which, probably the Committee will give  
“ them



“ them orders. Yesterday morning, the  
 “ uneasiness increasing, I went to the  
 “ Mayor’s house; he had assembled the  
 “ Officers of the Court of the Palace. I  
 “ entreated him to send two of those Gen-  
 “ tlemen to the Committee of Inquiry, to  
 “ tell them that I was sure that on last  
 “ Saturday they had received this denun-  
 “ ciation, and that I thought they would  
 “ have communicated the same to the  
 “ Mayor and the Commander-in-Chief.—  
 “ But these Gentlemen did not find any  
 “ body at the Chamber of the Committee  
 “ of Inquiry at that hour, nor when they  
 “ went again at nine or ten o’clock in the  
 “ evening. About eleven o’clock I received  
 “ fresh information respecting this escape,  
 “ and I charged a confidential person to  
 “ communicate to the Mayor the note  
 “ which contained it. He sent for the  
 “ Commander-in-Chief, who stationed me  
 “ at the Tuileries. There, in his pre-  
 “ sence, I gave orders that all the gates and  
 “ doors should be carefully kept shut, ex-  
 “ cept the door of the Princes’ Court.—  
 “ Two Colonels, a Captain, an Adjutant,  
 “ and an Officer of a company of the Centre  
 “ were all night in the court of the Palace



“ and at the door by which the escape was  
“ to be made. It was not till this morning  
“ that I learned, from the same person who  
“ had given me the information, the news  
“ of the departure. She told me that they  
“ had gone through the door mentioned. I  
“ answered, that it was impossible, be-  
“ cause all the Guard could certify that dur-  
“ ing the whole night it had been guarded  
“ by five Officers, of whom I made  
“ one.”

After hearing this recital, which *M. Bailly* confirmed without adding any thing to it, the Assembly approved of a resolution which the Directory of the Department had taken, and by which they enjoined the Municipality of Paris immediately to affix seals on the apartments of the Tuileries and Luxembourg; to examine if any secret outlets had been contrived at the Tuileries; to keep in confinement till further order, and interrogate, the persons residing in the Palace, and to prevent any persons from leaving Paris that day.

*M. de Montmorin* at last arrived, and having taken his place, said, that he came in consequence of the orders of the Assembly, that he had nothing to inform  
3 them



them of; that he could only assure them of his deep affliction. The President invited him to join the other Ministers, to concert with them the measures to be taken in the present circumstances, and to see to the execution of the decrees which the Assembly had just passed to secure the tranquillity of the Kingdom.

Count *d'Affri* appeared at the same time at the bar, accompanied by five or six Staff Officers belonging to the Swiss Guards.— He spoke some sentences, which the weakness of his voice prevented from being heard, and which the President repeated in the following terms: “ *M. d'Affri*, whose  
 “ long services, and great age, prevent him  
 “ from making himself easily heard in the  
 “ different parts of the Hall, has just expressed to the National Assembly his fidelity towards the Nation. He also answers  
 “ for the fidelity of his Staff, whose patriotism may be relied upon. He declares  
 “ that he will obey only the orders of the  
 “ Assembly; that he looks upon himself  
 “ not as a Foreigner, but as a French Officer; and that he shall think it his duty  
 “ to die for the country. He also entreats,  
 “ that, considering his great age, he may be



“ succeeded by the Officer next to him in  
“ rank, and whose sentiments are the same  
“ as his.” General and repeated applauses testified the satisfaction of the Assembly at these encouraging assurances.

After a few minutes more spent in motions of little importance, the President observed, that if no person had any proposal to make relative to the present circumstances, the Assembly would perhaps think proper to pass to the order of the day, till the Committees were ready to make a report on the different objects which had been referred to them. There was a dignity in this conduct. The Assembly were sensible of it, and did not hesitate to adopt it. They decreed an article of the penal code, and the reporter was proceeding to the next, when *M. de la Porte* was announced. He was introduced to the bar, and said :

“ This morning at eight o’clock, a ser-  
“ vant belonging to the apartments of the  
“ King’s chief Valet-de-Chambre delivered  
“ a packet to me, which I opened, and found  
“ a note from his Majesty, and a memorial  
“ written with his own hand, of which  
“ I read only the first and last page.—  
“ I im-



“ I immediately went to the Keeper of the  
 “ Seal, to communicate these papers to him,  
 “ and afterwards to the President, whom I  
 “ did not find at home.”

It was then proposed that the note and the memorial should be read; but *M. de la Porte* expressing a desire that the note, which was addressed individually to himself, might not be publicly read, the Assembly complied with his request, and it was returned to him. The memorial was given to one of the Secretaries, who read it\*. When finished, *Barnave* observed, that this memorial was of too much importance to be deposited in the hands of any member of the Assembly, or even in those of a Committee, before the character of the paper was ascertained. He moved in consequence, that in the first place *M. de la Porte* should sign a declaration attesting the manner in which he had received this memorial, and the deposit he had made of it; and that the signature of the President, or of a Secretary, should be affixed to each sheet to prove its authenticity. He also proposed,

\* See Appendix, No. xvii,



that all the Military Commanders in Paris should be ordered that day to the bar, to take their oaths of obedience to the Assembly, and receive their orders. The Assembly referred this second proposition to the Military Committee, decreed the former motion, and suspended business for one hour. It was then four o'clock in the afternoon.

On resuming business, it was reported to the Assembly that the Ambassadors from Foreign Powers manifested some uneasiness. After some debates concerning what ought to be done in this respect, the following Decree was adopted :

“ The National Assembly (the King being absent) order the Minister for Foreign Affairs to acquaint the Ambassadors from Foreign Powers resident at Paris, and also the Ambassadors of France residing at Foreign Courts, with the intention of the French Nation to continue with the respective Courts and States that correspondence of amity and good understanding which has hitherto existed ; and to inform the Foreign Ministers, that they are to send to him the official notes  
“ with



“ with which they may be commissioned by  
 “ their Courts.”

*Charles de Lameth*, in this debate, observed with justice, that they could speak no longer of the King's being carried off, after having heard his memorial; but he added, with his usual insolence, that they ought to use the word *flight*, instead of the expression *carried off*—as if the multiplied outrages which had reduced *Louis XVI.* to that fatal extremity had not already rendered the Assembly sufficiently guilty; or as if they wanted to have recourse to that further crime to strengthen their popularity.

The deliberation relative to the Decree I have reported being concluded, the Committee of Finances presented the account demanded from them relative to the state of the Public Treasury, and of the funds for extraordinary expences (*Caisse de l'Extraordinaire*). This report was followed by the reading of a Resolution of the Section of the *Croix rouge*, in which *they declared their respect and their fidelity to the Assembly, and promised obedience to all the Decrees, whether sanctioned or not, and notwithstanding*



*withstanding the King's Memorial.* The Assembly, after manifesting, by the liveliest applause, the joy this Resolution gave them, proudly passed again to the order of the day, and decreed two new articles of the penal code.

*M. de Rochambeau* now appeared at the bar, and repeated the same assurances of zeal, fidelity, and entire submission that the Section of the *Croix rouge* had given in their Resolution, and obtained the same applauses. His example was immediately followed by almost all the General Officers and Colonels in commission, who were members of the *Coté-Gauche* of the Assembly, and suggested the idea of drawing up a new form of an oath suitable to the occasion, to be sent to the Army, after all the Deputies holding military commissions should have taken it. This proposal was unanimously decreed by the members of the *Coté-Gauche*: those of the *Coté-Droit* took no part in the determination. The Military Committee were charged to draw up and present, during the present Sitting, the new form of the oath. While they were employed upon it, the Deputies of the Department of the District,



District and of the Municipality of Versailles were introduced to the bar, and delivered the following address :

“ The King’s departure is a painful event  
“ to all Frenchmen ; but if the King has  
“ abandoned his post the National Assem-  
“ bly will have the courage to preserve  
“ theirs. The Department of the Seine and  
“ Oise, the District, the Courts of Justice,  
“ and the Deputies of the Sections of the  
“ Town, having assembled in the Town-  
“ House of Versailles, and being all of one  
“ opinion, unanimously resolved, that four  
“ Deputies should instantly repair to the  
“ National Assembly, to testify to them the  
“ confidence which is their due, and at this  
“ moment necessary, and to assure them  
“ that they consider the Constituent Body  
“ as the centre around which all French-  
“ men will rally, and who, faithful to their  
“ oath, will make every sacrifice to main-  
“ tain the Constitution of the Kingdom.”

This address, worthy the infamous conduct of this disloyal Town since the commencement of the Revolution, was most favourably received in the Assembly. They  
ordered



ordered it to be printed, and inserted in the minutes, firmly persuaded that all the other Departments would hasten to follow the example of that of Versailles.

To confirm the confidence and security of the Assembly, *Alexander de Lameth* proposed, in the name of the Military and Constitutional Committees, a plan for a Decree tending to prepare for service all the National Guards throughout the Kingdom, and to form of them an army of three or four hundred thousand men, at the disposal of the Nation. This Decree was unanimously adopted.

Although the Sitting continued the business of the Assembly was suspended for a short time, at ten o'clock at night, at midnight, and at five o'clock in the morning, a great number of the members always remaining in the Hall. The subjects on which they were engaged during the night were of no great importance; but in the continuation of this Sitting next day, (Thursday 22d June,) the reading of a letter from the French Envoy at Mentz, dated the 15th of June, occasioned great uneasiness. It gave an account of the entertainments given to the Count *d'Artois*, of the frequent conferences he held with the Prince



Prince *de Condé*; of the great concourse of Emigrants, and particularly Officers; of the arrival of almost all the *Gardes-du-Corps*; of the assembling of the Magistrates of the different Parliaments; of their Committees, &c. &c.

*M. Freteau*, who was the informer and reader of this letter, said that it but too well justified the different measures which the Assembly had taken; that it was of great importance to accelerate their execution, and more especially to hasten the departure of *M. de Rochambeau*.

Scarcely was this letter read, when a Deputation from the new Court which had been substituted for the King's Privy Council (*Tribunal de Cassation*) were introduced to the bar. The harangue pronounced by the speaker of this Deputation (*Garan de Coulon*,) and the answer of the President (*Alexander de Beauharnois*,) were worthy of each other, and too characteristic of those two persons, and of the minds of the majority of the Assembly, not to be made known. The following then was the speech of *Garan de Coulon*:

“ Gentlemen, being essentially attached to  
“ the



“ the National Assembly by the law of our  
“ establishment, we come in this new storm,  
“ which, like all the others, will serve but  
“ to hasten the progress of the Constitution,  
“ of Liberty, and the Public Happiness;  
“ we come to declare to you our submission  
“ to your Decrees, and to renew the oath of  
“ fidelity *to the Nation*, and *to the Law*;  
“ to the Nation, of whom you are the  
“ worthy Representatives; and to the Law,  
“ which preserves all its force and purity,  
“ as it does not cease to be the expression of  
“ the general will.”

The President's answer was :

“ The National Assembly have already  
“ received testimonies of fidelity from several  
“ Departments of the Kingdom. The  
“ wish of the People is manifest; order is  
“ maintained in the Capital; every thing  
“ combines to assure the friends of Liberty  
“ that their work shall be respected, and  
“ that the great event by which its enemies  
“ have attempted in vain to shake it, will  
“ only serve to prove to the whole world,  
“ that Frenchmen once free, in consequence  
“ of their wish, of their energy, and  
“ of



“ of the enlightened state of the age, will  
“ perish to the last man rather than resign  
“ their freedom. The Assembly, gratified  
“ with your attention, invite you to the  
“ sitting.”

The speech and the answer were loudly and repeatedly applauded, and ordered to be printed. How could the Assembly hear, without calling the speaker to order, a new form of a civic oath, in which the promise of being faithful to the King was omitted? How was it that they were not sensible that, by receiving so criminal an homage with such delight, they rendered themselves still more guilty than the villain who offered it?

Till the Committees were ready to present some of the reports with which they had been charged, relative to the situation of things, the Assembly passed to the order of the day, and ordained several decrees concerning the new organization of the navy, the military works of Havre-de-Grace, the fortifications of Cherbourg, and the execution of the tariff of the duties on colonial merchandise. The Military Committee then proposed the new form for the oath which they had been charged to draw up, and moved, that  
Com-



Commissioners, chosen from the Assembly, should be sent to the frontier departments, to administer the oath, make minutes of it, and concert with the Administrative Bodies and the Commanders of the troops, such measures as they should think proper for the maintenance of public order and the safety of the State.

The new oath was conceived in these terms :

“ I swear to employ the arms put into my  
“ hands for the defence of the country,  
“ and to maintain, against all enemies at  
“ home and abroad, the Constitution de-  
“ creed by the National Assembly ; to die  
“ rather than suffer the invasion of the  
“ French territory by foreign troops ; and  
“ to obey such orders only as may be given  
“ in consequence of the decrees of the Na-  
“ tional Assembly.”

The Committee joined to this form a list of the members of the Assembly whom they proposed to name as Commissioners to the different Departments. All these articles were decreed unanimously, and with the warmest enthusiasm. The President having  
read



read the form of the oath, the members of the Assembly who held military offices crowded to the Tribune in order to take it. Some members of the *Coté-Droit*, and particularly *M. de Juigné* and *M. de Luzignan*, attempted to propose some restrictions, and mentioned the King; but they were not permitted to go on. "I declare," said the President to them, "that I will not suffer any one to speak till after all those who, having heard the form, are willing to swear it pure and simply."

The Assembly then decreed that the Directories of the Departments, the Districts, and the Municipalities, in whose boundaries the houses and buildings comprised in the Civil List were situated, should immediately cause seals to be affixed on them, should take into their hands the management of the domains and other estates comprised in the Civil List, and should superintend the woods and forests appertaining to them, till a law relative to the forests should be passed. It is something extraordinary that not any opposition whatever was made to this abominable decree, by which the Assembly took into their own hands all the Royal houses and domains appendant, to punish the  
King



King for attempting to escape the fresh outrages reserved for him by the Factious.

Nothing more that was remarkable passed at this Sitting, which lasted till ten o'clock at night, except the reading of the address meant to serve as an answer to the King's Declaration\*. This paper, in which the Assembly for the first time dared to take formally the title of the *Constituent Assembly*, was also adopted with great applause, notwithstanding the insolence, the perfidy, and the notorious insincerity which dictated every sentence of it.

The boldness manifested by the Assembly made no great progress out of doors during the two first days. Paris was calm, but it was the calm of stupor. The inhabitants stopped one another in the streets, and mutually put questions with uneasiness. The battalions and a part of the people were under arms, and seemed to be looking for an enemy. All the shops, all places of public amusement, were shut. The travelling of the public carriages was forbidden. Placards from the Department, the Council-General of the Commune, and the Munici-

\* See Appendix, No. xviii.



pality, were renewed every instant to urge the necessity of tranquillity. “What is to become of us?” it was said. “Why, instead of making France happy by wise and gradual reforms, have we been so inconsiderately thrown into these new systems, which have made a division between the Nation and the King, and among all the orders of society?”—“We shall have a Republic,” answered the agents of the Factious; and to prepare the public mind for it, some hired brigands ran through the streets, smearing all the arms, effigies, and names of the King and Queen, and of the Princes, and every where effacing the Crowns and Fleurs-de-Lis.

In the mean time the Royal Family arrived at Bondi without accident, and, quitting the two carriages in which they had left Paris, they all got into that which the Count *de Fersen* had been commissioned to get made. Post-horses were put to it, and their Majesties took the road to *Chalons sur Marne*, having but one coach in their suite, and three *Gardes-du-Corps* dressed as Couriers. At the distance of twelve posts from Paris, owing to some repair that was necessary to the coach or harness, their Majesties



were detained near two hours at the small town of Montmirail. This delay was the more fatal, as the King did not think of sending notice of it to the next post where he was expected, and as, notwithstanding the advice of *M. de Bouillé*, his Majesty had also neglected the important precaution of dispatching a Courier some hours before him to inform him of his departure. It was about half past three o'clock when the Royal Family arrived at Chalons. Here the Post-Master knew the King, who, during the journey, was too forgetful of the risk he ran by shewing himself. No ill consequence resulted from this at Chalons, as the Post-Master proved to be a worthy man, and was silent.

The King when he left Chalons thought he had no further danger to apprehend, as he expected to find on his road all the way to Montmedy the numerous detachments that were to be stationed there by *M. de Bouillé*; but unhappily the two Officers who commanded at Pont-Somevelle, the next post, and who had calculated that he must arrive there by four o'clock at the latest, not seeing the King, nor the Courier, who they expected would come some hours before the  
Royal



Royal Family, concluded that some obstacle must have prevented their Majesties' departure; and they left that post at five o'clock, though they had been expressly ordered by *M. de Bouillé* to remain there the whole day. Half an hour afterwards, the King arrived at Pont-Someville; but not perceiving a single soldier, he went forward, without taking the precaution of sending on one of his guards to announce his arrival at the next post, whence the intelligence would have been forwarded, according to the orders of *M. de Bouillé*. His Majesty doubtless imagined that the General, who from the beginning had expressed the greatest uneasiness concerning the suspicions and alarms which the appearance of the troops might excite upon this road, had been compelled to withdraw them.

It was half past seven in the evening when the Royal Family arrived at St. Menehould, and stopped to change horses. The Officer who there commanded a detachment of Dragoons, surmising that the carriages which stopped for fresh horses were those he was charged to escort, attempted to draw out his troop on horseback; but he was prevented by the people, and the stables where



the horses belonging to the Dragoons stood, were taken possession of and defended by the National Guard. The King, uneasy at not finding any of the measures on which he relied had been taken, imprudently put his head out of the carriage window, and asked some questions relative to the road.— It was at that fatal moment that the great resemblance of the countenance of *Louis XVI.* to the engraving on the Assignats struck the son of the Post-Master of St. Menehould, who had already guessed that the carriage, which was to be escorted by detachments of troops as if it was conveying a treasure, contained suspected persons. On going closer to look in, he thought he could also distinguish the Queen, and judged that the other travellers must be part of the Royal Family, or their suite. He was further confirmed in this opinion, when he heard the orders given to take the road to Varennes, and saw the Officer who commanded the detachment speaking very animatedly to one of the Couriers\*. The fear, however, of creating a false alarm kept him silent; but as soon as the two car-

\* See Appendix, No. xix.



riages set off, he mounted on horseback to follow them, or rather to make his way to Varennes before them by a cross-road, and to cause them to be arrested if his suspicions should prove well founded. Their Majesties again changed horses at Clermont in Argonne, without experiencing the slightest difficulty. *M. de Damas*, who commanded that post, held his troop in readiness, in constant expectation of the Courier who was to inform him of the King's arrival; but that precaution having been neglected at the post of Clermont, as at all the others, their Majesties arrived there, and set out again, without *M. de Damas's* knowing any thing of it. However, in about half an hour after they were gone, from the description given of the two carriages that had just passed, and which had taken the road to Varennes, he had no doubt that they were the carriages of the Royal Family, and immediately gave his Dragoons orders to mount their horses. The District, the Municipality, and National Guard of the place, alarmed at this sudden and mysterious departure, opposed it by all the means in their power. The Dragoons, yielding to the entreaties and threats of the National Guard,



were base enough to abandon their commander, who was left to set out alone for Varennes, where he arrived some moments after the outrageous arrest of their Majesties, on the information of the Post-Master of St. Menehould, who had arrived above an hour before the Royal Family.

This disastrous news reached Paris on the 22d of June at night. At ten o'clock a great noise was heard in the Assembly; and amidst a thousand shouts of joy the words "*The King is taken, the King is arrested,*" were distinguished. At this moment two couriers, announced by loud clappings, entered the Hall, and gave the President the packets with which they were charged. Before he opened them the President requested the Assembly to keep the most profound silence, and gave an order to the galleries to do the same. These packets contained a letter from the Municipal Officers of Varennes, Clermont, and St. Menehould, and several copies of orders given by *M. de Bouillé* for the march and stations of the different detachments destined to favour the King's escape. The reading of these papers was followed by several motions. Those of the *Lameths* having obtained the majority, the drawing



drawing up of the decrees which they proposed was referred to the Military Committee; it was finished in less than an hour, and the decrees passed in the following terms :

“ The National Assembly having heard  
 “ the reading, &c. &c. decree that the most  
 “ powerful and active measures shall be  
 “ taken to secure the King’s person, that of  
 “ the Heir Apparent, and those of the Royal  
 “ Family by whom the King is accom-  
 “ panied, and to ensure their return to Paris.

“ They order, that for the purpose of ex-  
 “ ecuting the same, *M. Latour Maubourg*,  
 “ *M. Pethion*, and *M. Barnave*, shall re-  
 “ pair to Varennes, and wherever else it  
 “ shall be necessary for them to go, with  
 “ the title and character of Commissioners  
 “ of the National Assembly.

“ They give them power to call out the  
 “ National Guards and troops of the line ;  
 “ to give orders to the Magistrates and Mu-  
 “ nicipal Bodies, as well as to all officers  
 “ civil and military ; and generally to do  
 “ and order all that may be necessary for the  
 “ execution of their missions.

“ *They particularly recommend to them*



“ to attend and see that the respect due to  
“ the royal dignity be maintained.

“ They decree moreover, that the said  
“ Commissioners shall be accompanied by  
“ *M. Dumas*, Adjutant General of the Army,  
“ who is charged to attend to the execution  
“ of their orders.”

The second decree suspended *M. de Bouillé* from all his military offices, forbade every person from obeying him, and ordered the Courts of Justice and all Magistrates to cause him to be arrested and conducted to Chalons, and the National Guards and troops of the line, as well as all other citizens, to be aiding and assisting in his apprehension.

Lastly, a third decree, passed upon the motion of *M. d'André*, enjoined the Department of Paris, the Municipality, and the Commander of the National Guard to take all necessary measures for the safety of the King's person, and of his family.

At one o'clock in the morning (Thursday, 23d June) the business of the Assembly was suspended, the sitting being permanent. At half past eight the President again took his seat, and afterwards walked in procession with a great number of Deputies, it being  
the



the festival called *Fête Dieu*. They were attended by a detachment of grenadiers belonging to the National Guard, who having received permission to take, in the presence of the Assembly, the new Oath prescribed for the troops, filed off in the Hall, in the midst of clapping, and to the tune of the famous revolutionary air, *Ah ça ira*, played by a military band.

In the course of the day several persons who had or who pretended to have assisted in arresting the King were admitted to the bar, where with the most horrid impudence they related the means they had employed to commit that crime, and particularly their threats of firing into their Majesties' carriage if it did not stop: and these regicide exploits obtained applauses no less criminal. *Robespierre* even proposed that civic crowns should be decreed to these villains; and the proposal, loudly applauded by the Assembly, was referred to the Committee of the Constitution.

At five o'clock in the evening a letter from the three Commissioners sent to meet the King, dated from La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, Thursday 23d June, at nine o'clock in the morning, informed the Assembly that the



King had passed the night at Chalons; that he had arrived there escorted by an army of National Guards; that every where the people were in great spirits, but tranquil, and manifested their respectful confidence in the Assembly.

The greatest dangers which the Royal Family had to experience were at their approach to the capital, and on their entering it—not only because the populace there were more corrupt and more misled by the revolutionary mania, but because they had long been accustomed to consider the insults offered to his Majesty as acts of patriotism. An apprehension that on this occasion more serious attempts might be made, determined the Committee of the Constitution to propose the following decree:

Art. I. “ The National Assembly declare  
“ traitors to the Nation and the King those  
“ who have counselled, aided, and executed  
“ the carrying off of the King; and  
“ all those who, in order to favour perfidious  
“ designs, as contrary to the rights of  
“ the French people as to the interests of  
“ royalty, shall endeavour to oppose the  
“ King’s return to the capital, and his re-  
“ union



“ union with the Representatives of the Na-  
“ tion.

Art. II. “ They order all public officers and  
“ commanders of troops of the line, the Na-  
“ tional Gendarmerie, and National Guards,  
“ to employ, each according to their station,  
“ the authority confided to them to main-  
“ tain in full security the King’s person,  
“ and that of the individuals of his family  
“ who accompany him.

Art. III. “ They order them also to re-  
“ pel by force, and to seize and put under  
“ arrest, to be immediately prosecuted, *all*  
“ *those who should dare to behave impro-*  
“ *perly towards the King, or who should be*  
“ *deficient in the respect due to the royal au-*  
“ *thority and dignity*, or violate in the per-  
“ sons that accompany him the safety of the  
“ individual, guarantied to every Citizen  
“ by the Constitution.

Art. IV. “ They enjoin the public ac-  
“ cusers in the Courts of Paris to prosecute  
“ rigorously and without delay whosoever  
“ shall endeavour to impede the effect of the  
“ measures which shall be taken by the De-  
“ partment and by the Municipality of  
“ Paris, according to the decrees of the  
“ National Assembly, to secure the tranquil-  
“ lity



“ lity of the capital, and guaranty the King’s  
“ safety with that of the persons accom-  
“ panying him, at their arrival in Paris.”

Immediately after reading this plan for a decree, several members of the *Coté Droit* rose to demand its being put to the vote; but *Robespierre* and *Reubell* opposed it. “ The  
“ first article of the decree proposed to you,” said *Robespierre*, “ prejudices great ques-  
“ tions; the duty of the Representatives of  
“ the Nation compels them to take a much  
“ more important question into considera-  
“ tion, which ought to be solemnly dis-  
“ cussed. I shall not enter upon it; it  
“ strikes you all, and in this view I move  
“ the adjournment of the first article. The  
“ others are useless; the conduct of the  
“ people has been so prudent, so grand, that  
“ it is impossible not to trust to their mode-  
“ ration. It would be doing them injustice  
“ not to look upon the precautions already  
“ taken as sufficient.”

*Reubell* also spoke violently against the first article. He was angry that the Committee had made use of the expression *carrying off*. “ How, Gentlemen,” cried he, “ after our experience shall we never  
“ dare



“ dare to say the truth? By neglecting to  
 “ say it, we have led France to the brink  
 “ of a precipice! The expression *carrying*  
 “ *off* is misplaced, in regard to all the  
 “ members of the Assembly who are not  
 “ accomplices in the flight. The last sen-  
 “ tence of the article is still much more  
 “ important. The King is to return, Gen-  
 “ tlemen, and without doubt we ought to take  
 “ care that he returns safe; but leave out  
 “ the words *re-union with the Representa-*  
 “ *tives of the Nation*. I shall say no more;  
 “ for whoever does not understand me is  
 “ unworthy of being a Frenchman.” The  
 villains present proved by their applauses  
 that they but too well understood what he  
 meant, and honest men shuddered with hor-  
 ror at it.

This business was interrupted by the en-  
 trance of *M. de la Fayette* at the head of  
 the Parisian National Guard, who came to  
 take the new oath. “ You see before you,  
 “ Gentlemen,” said the General, “ Citi-  
 “ zens who are ever the more devoted to  
 “ their Country, the more it needs them.  
 “ They defended Liberty in its birth against  
 “ the first conspiracies which attacked it.  
 “ They are still more eager to rally round it  
 “ in



“ in these unforeseen days in which it is  
“ threatened ; and if it be true that the  
“ sublime and magnanimous tranquillity  
“ which the People of the Capital have dis-  
“ played has only served to augment the  
“ fury of our enemies, hasten to point out  
“ to us where they are, and let the first sol-  
“ diers of Liberty be the first to repel the  
“ soldiers of Despotism.”

Some stale compliments upon the civic virtues, and the endless courage of the National Guard, were all the President's answer. He very prudently abstained from pointing out to these defenders of Liberty and the Constitution *where they might find Despotism and its soldiers*, because he could not with truth at that moment have answered *M. de la Fayette*, but by pointing out to him the *Coté-Gauche* of the Assembly, and the Jacobin Clubs. He concluded his answer with reading the form of the new oath, which was taken by all the Guards at once. After them, several thousands of Citizens, of every condition, filed through the Hall for near three hours, raising their hands when they came opposite the President, and crying, *We swear it!—Vive la Nation!* and at the same time the music of the



the National Guard played, without interruption, the air *Ah! ça ira*.

The shouts and tumult caused them to lose sight of the Decree proposed by the Committee of the Constitution, who themselves thought it more prudent to let it drop. It was then half past eleven o'clock at night, and the President suspended business (the Sitting being permanent) till the Committees were ready with some new report.

Such were the events of the 21st, 22d and 23d days of June. Their importance seemed to me to require all the details into which I have entered; and I have endeavoured to report them with the greatest exactness.



## CHAPTER XLII.

*The King and Royal Family arrested at Varennes—M. de Dampierre murdered in the Presence of their Majesties—M. de Montmorin suspected—He justifies himself—The National Assembly suspend the Proceedings of the Electoral Assemblies—Letters from the Commissioners sent to meet the King—The Villain who arrested the King is presented to the Assembly—The Assembly, informed by the Commissioners of the Day on which they expected to arrive with the Royal Family, pass a Decree on the Occasion—The Arrival of the Royal Family—The Insults received by them—M. de la Fayette—The dangers experienced by the three Gardes-du-Corps,*



*du-Corps who had attended their Majesties—Motion for disbanding the Gardes-du-Corps—M. de Bonnai—Proceedings ordered to be commenced relative to the Departure of the Royal Family—The Declaration of the King and Queen—Deputation from the Commune of Varennes—The Count d'Estaing's ridiculous Letter—Decree relative to the Appointment of a Governor for the Dauphin—M. de Bouillé's Letter to the Assembly.*

WHILE the Assembly were administering to the Public Officers, the National Guards, the troops of the line, and the inhabitants of Paris, oaths of fidelity and obedience in which the King was no longer mentioned, the Royal Family, who on their entering Varennes had been arrested by *Drouet* the Post-Master of St. Menchould, and seven or eight villains, and had been kept in confinement by Citizen *Saussé*, Attorney of the Commune, were returning to Paris by short stages, under the escort of some Commissioners of districts and municipalities, and about 6000 National Guards or patriots assembled at the sound of the alarm-bell. This army was successively relieved by other



National Guards on the road, and reinforced by all the vagabonds they met. *M. de Bouillé*, too late informed of their Majesties' being arrested, could not reach Varennes with the regiment of *Royal Allemand* till two hours after their departure, and he left the town in despair at not being able to afford any succour to that august and unfortunate family \*.

At Varennes the King had the pain of seeing those officers who had manifested most zeal to serve him, seized and treated ignominiously. On the way a sight more horrid still was reserved for him. *M. de Dampierre*, an old gentleman of Champagne, being by chance on the road to Chalons at the moment that the Royal Family were passing, wished to approach the carriage, and endeavoured to pierce through the mob of furies by which it was surrounded. He was unarmed, and merely wished to testify to their Majesties by looks his loyalty and grief. This desire, so natural and so affecting, cost him his life. He was inhu-

\* See the particulars related in the Memoirs of *M. de Bouillé*, and the statement which I have inserted in my private Memoirs, Vol. ii. p. 220.



manly murdered before the eyes of the King, to the shouts of *Vive la Nation*.

On the 24th the Assembly were informed of all the particulars relative to the King's journey and arrest, from an account given by the Aide-de-Camp *Romeuf*, who, in consequence of *M. de la Fayette's* orders, had followed the Royal Family, and arrived some hours after them at Varennes, where he gave notice of the decree which ordered that their Majesties should be brought back to Paris. This Aide-de-Camp was the same whom the workmen on the *Pont Louis XVI.* had stopped on the morning of the 21st of June. Had they but detained him two hours longer, his arrival at Varennes would have been so much retarded, that *M. de Bouillé* would have been in time, and the Royal Family might have been rescued!

A deputation from the district of Clermont in Argonne, who had been introduced at the bar with *Romeuf*, confirmed his account, and laid before the Assembly an extract of the minutes of their Directory. The reading of this minute was interrupted to read a passport, which the King had presented at Varennes, and which ran thus: By  
“ the King's authority, &c. We command and



“ order that you allow the Baronefs *de Korff*  
“ going to Franckfort, with two children,  
“ one woman, a valet-de-chambre, and three  
“ fervants, &c. &c. to pafs freely. This  
“ passport lafts for a month only. Given  
“ at Paris, June 5th, 1791. Signed LOUIS,  
“ and lower, By the King, MONTMORIN.”

At the name of the Minifter, furprife and indignation were manifested by the Affembly.

“ I move,” faid Camus, “ that orders be given  
“ immediately to *M. de Montmorin* to repair  
“ hither, for his fafety and for ours alfo.”

Another Member of the *Coté-Gauche* moved,  
“ that the Minifter fhould be brought by  
“ a numerous detachment of the National  
“ Guards.” These two motions were unanimously decreed, and *M. de la Fayette* was at the fame time charged to put the decree in execution.

Meanwhile, till the Minifter was brought, the Affembly had time to finifh the reading of the minute of the diftrict of Clermont; and to decree a propofition of the Committee of Coinage, that the metal of the church-bells fhould be coined into pence and half-pence. *Alexander de Lameth* alfo obtained, in the name of the Military Committee, a decree which augmented the powers of the  
Generals



Generals of the army, and commanded the Civil Commissioners to find them the number of National Guards which they should judge necessary for the service.

The populace, always prone to condemn, already proclaimed *M. de Montmorin* a traitor to the Nation, and could not mention his name without fury. The most ferocious cries followed him to the very door of the Assembly, which he never would have reached but for the powerful escort which protected him. The threats and sanguinary clamours of the mob did not deprive him of his presence of mind. He answered the questions put to him by the President firmly and ingenuously. He said, “that passports  
 “for foreigners were always granted on  
 “the demand of their ambassadors; that  
 “the Minister had no means of knowing,  
 “or of ascertaining, whether the foreign  
 “names given in were true or feigned, and  
 “consequently that he could not be answer-  
 “able for them. It gives me pain,” added he, “to find that such a circumstance can  
 “have created suspicions against me: if in  
 “giving this passport I had been guilty of  
 “the treason of which I am suspected, it



“ might be imagined that I should either  
“ have gone before or soon followed it.”

The Assembly appeared to require no farther explanation. Even the galleries showed by their applauses that they were satisfied; but *Camus* still had doubts. “ I do not  
“ understand,” said he, “ this manner of  
“ proceeding. It appears to me that you  
“ decide upon mere words. I am surprised  
“ that you are always so easily satisfied,  
“ and so ready to take a favourable impres-  
“ sion. I move, that the Assembly name  
“ four Commissioners, to search all the of-  
“ fices where this passport has been made  
“ out, and to ascertain if there be any  
“ paper or document to demand it.”

This motion was approved of, and *Camus* was one of the Commissioners appointed to make the examination he proposed. During their absence *M. de Montmorin* remained in the Assembly with the other Ministers who had also attended.

In this interval the Assembly, upon a report of the Committee of the Constitution, decreed, that taking into consideration the new circumstances in which they were placed, they could not, without endangering the



the public welfare, determine upon the precise period of their separation, whatever zeal they might employ to accelerate it, &c. It was therefore ordered, that the Electors who had been or should be nominated by the Primary Assemblies should not meet; and that the nomination of Deputies be suspended until a day which should be fixed by a new decree.

At first this decree was opposed by several Members, who moved the previous question. Others endeavoured to prevent its being read through. But the Committee of the Constitution being powerfully supported by some Members of unsuspected patriotism, particularly by *Rewbell*, represented that this measure was indispensable to prevent the Electoral Assemblies from taking any resolutions upon the present circumstances; and that if it was not adopted, there would be a risk of having not only eighty-three deliberating bodies, but two National Assemblies existing at once; and that this confusion must lead to a dissolution of the Monarchy. It is curious enough that this argument, which decided the question in favour of the Committee's opinion, was advanced by those Members of the Assembly who were the



most obstinately bent upon overthrowing the forms and principles of Monarchical Government.

At five o'clock in the evening, the Commissioners who had been sent to *M. de Montmorin's* offices returned, and declared, that they had ascertained that a passport had been granted to the Baroness *de Korff*, on the 5th of June, on the demand of *M. de Simolin*, the Russian Minister; that under the pretence of the first having been inadvertently burnt, a second passport, being a duplicate of the former, had been obtained by the same channel; and that the papers by which these facts were attested had been delivered to them.

This report removing every doubt as to *M. de Montmorin*, the Assembly decreed unanimously, that his conduct was irreproachable; and ordered, that this decree, together with the report on which it was founded, should be immediately published, and fixed up in every part of the town. At the same time they appointed four other Commissioners to go and undeceive and stop the people, who were pressing in crowds to *M. de Montmorin's* house.

The Assembly received at that moment  
a letter



a letter from the three Commissioners whom they had sent to the King. The contents were as follows :

“ *Dormans, June 24th 1791,*

“ *A quarter past three*

“ *o'clock in the morning.*

“ MR. PRESIDENT,

“ We met the King near Epernay. He  
 “ was in a carriage with the Queen, the  
 “ Dauphin, the Princess Royal, *Madame*  
 “ *Elizabeth*, and *Madame Tourzel*. Three  
 “ servants were on the coach-box, and two  
 “ women followed in a cabriolet. The  
 “ road was filled with an immense number  
 “ of people in arms. We approached the  
 “ King's person, informed him of our mis-  
 “ sion, and read to him the decree of  
 “ the National Assembly : we read it also  
 “ to the brave Citizens who escorted him.  
 “ We appointed *M. Dumas* their Com-  
 “ mander, and we proceeded in good order  
 “ to Dormans, where we pass the night.—  
 “ To-morrow we shall reach Meaux,  
 “ and the day after arrive in Paris. Our  
 “ journey is retarded by the multitudes of  
 “ National Guards who crowd from all  
 “ parts to the road where the King passes,  
 “ to



“ to escort him ; their zeal, and their prudent and noble conduct, deserve our  
“ praise.

“ We are, &c. &c. &c.

“ (Signed) *Pethion,*

“ *La Tour,*

“ *Maubourg,*

“ *Barnave,*

“ *Dumas.*”

After the reading of this letter, the members of the six criminal courts of Paris were admitted to the bar. They complimented the Assembly upon their wisdom, energy, and heroism. They paid them the homage of their admiration, gave them the assurance of their fidelity, and testified the extent of their patriotism by the following sentence:—

“ In a crisis like the present, when *the first*  
“ *Citizen of the Empire is perjured ; when*  
“ *the first Public Functionary, led by perfidious suggestions, has deserted his post,*  
“ *&c. &c.*” These blasphemous expressions, loudly applauded, obtained for those who uttered them the thanks of the Assembly, and the honours of the Sitting.

To this criminal Deputation succeeded that of the Council-General of the Commune of  
the



the good City of Paris, who came to present to the Assembly the two villains who had contributed most to the arrest of the Royal Family. “ This,” said the speaker, “ is *M. Drouet*, Post-Master of St. Men-  
 “ hould, the first who thought he recognised  
 “ the King and Queen, and who thereupon  
 “ resolved to follow them : that is *M. Guil-*  
 “ *laume*, his comrade, who set out with  
 “ him, and, acting in concert, took mea-  
 “ sures to stop the suspected carriages.”—  
*M. Drouet* asked leave of the Assembly to relate what he had done upon this occasion ; and, being permitted, he read part of his narrative, and extemporised the rest. Almost every sentence of this tissue of patriotic boasting and insipid rhodomontade was applauded \*. The answer of the President, *Alexander Beauharnois* deserved, and obtained the same success. It was couched in these terms :

“ The National Assembly have received  
 “ you with that enthusiasm which they owe  
 “ to Citizens who have displayed so much  
 “ zeal, and so generous a devotion for their

\* See Appendix, No. xix.

“country ;



“ country ; to men who have probably  
“ saved France from a ruinous war. If the  
“ Parisians regret that you were not born  
“ among them, the whole Nation claim you.  
“ It is France which you have saved ; and  
“ the National Assembly engage to recom-  
“ pense the services which you have done  
“ your country. Your conduct has given  
“ them the most perfect satisfaction ; they  
“ invite you to the Sitting.”

A Deputation from the Directory of the Department now came to pay their homage to the Assembly. It was received with dignity, and the business was suspended.

The next morning at half past seven, the President received from the Commissioners who accompanied the King, a letter dated *Meaux, June 24th, eleven in the evening*. It mentioned, that the King and the persons with him would arrive at Paris the next day, June 25th, between two and three in the afternoon ; but as they might meet with delays on their journey, the Commissioners requested the Assembly to continue sitting till they were informed that the Royal Family were at the Tuilleries. The seals were still on the doors of the Palace, but  
the



the Municipality was authoris'd to take them off, and accordingly went thither in the morning; causing an order to be published in the mean time, prohibiting all persons from quitting Paris, till a new order granting leave should be issued.

The patriots of the Fauxbourgs were not without their proclamation also. Advertisements were stuck up every where, declaring *that whoever applauded the King should be bastinadoed, and whoever insulted him should be hanged.*

But among the outrages which blackened this day of horror, the most criminal was committed by the Assembly themselves.—They suffered the Committee of the Constitution to dare to announce, by their speaker, the lawyer *Thouret*, *that it was impossible to allow the original relation between the National Assembly and the King to subsist now; to endanger the validity of their Decrees, by submitting them to a sanction always subject to a disavowal; or to have the Executive Power vested where there are dispositions manifestly hostile to the Constitution.* These atrocious assertions were without doubt necessary to prepare the minds



minds of the people for the following Decree :

Art. 1. As soon as the King arrives at the Palace of the Tuilleries, there shall be appointed for him, provisionally, a guard, who, under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief of the Parisian National Guards, shall attend to his safety, and be answerable for his person.

Art. 2. The Heir Apparent of the Crown shall have a particular guard appointed for him provisionally, under the orders also of the Commander-in-Chief; and the National Assembly shall nominate a Governor for him.

Art. 3. All those persons who accompanied the Royal Family shall be put under arrest, and examined. The declaration of the King and Queen shall be heard without delay, that the National Assembly may take such measures as shall be judged necessary.

Art. 4. A particular guard shall be appointed provisionally for the Queen.

Art. 5. The Decree of the 21st of June, enjoining the Minister of Justice to affix the State Seal to the Decrees of the National Assembly,



sembly, without the sanction or assent of the King, shall remain in force until it is otherwise directed.

Art. 6. The Ministers and the King's Commissioners, who superintend the Funds for Extraordinary Expences, the National Treasury, and the Sinking Funds, shall continue authorised provisionally to discharge each in his own Department, and individually responsible, the functions of the Executive Power.

Art. 7. The Minister of the Interior shall transmit orders to the Director of the Department of Paris, to publish this Decree immediately, by sound of trumpet, in every quarter of the Town\*.

*M. Malouet* rose and opposed this Decree with energy and courage. "It is," he said, "in effect changing in an instant of time, and from this moment, the form of Government established by the Constitution you have decreed, and which you have sworn to maintain. In that Constitution the absence of the King was foreseen, and his person declared sacred and inviolable; but,

\* This last article was moved by *Desmeuniers*.



“ instead of adhering to the Constitutional  
“ measures which alone are applicable to  
“ this case, it is proposed to you to make  
“ a prisoner of the King, and to combine  
“ all the Sovereign Powers in the hands of  
“ the National Assembly. I move, that the  
“ Assembly resolve themselves into a Grand  
“ Committee, in order to deliberate upon the  
“ subject ; or, that we join the Committee of  
“ the Constitution, in their Chamber, where  
“ every one may freely make his observa-  
“ tions. Let us beware both of prejudice and  
“ thoughtlessness. Let us save the people  
“ from sorrow and wretchedness. I propose  
“ a conference, and I declare, that I will  
“ never accede to measures which tend to  
“ make the King a prisoner.”

*Ræderer*, “ wishing,” he said, “ to re-  
“ lieve the mind of the last speaker, as-  
“ serted, that the Decree which was pro-  
“ posed, decided nothing relative to the in-  
“ violability of the King. It had no re-  
“ ference either to accusing or to trying  
“ him. It simply decreed, that he should  
“ remain in custody provisionally.” *No !*  
*No !* It is shocking ! cried several voices ;  
and more still insisted that he should be  
called to order. He attempted to justify what  
he



he had said, but no one would listen to him. The agitation and tumult were violent. At length he was suffered to speak:—"I have  
 " expressed myself very ill, if I have been  
 " understood to admit, that the idea of  
 " keeping the King in custody is included  
 " in the plan of the Committee. I intended,  
 " on the contrary, to refute this explanation  
 " of the Decree which *M. Malouet* has ad-  
 " vanced; and I cannot be reprehensible for  
 " having used his own expressions." The want of candour in this explanation was apparent to every body, and *Rœderer* was hissed the more.

*Alexander Lameth* defended the plan of the Committee with superior address and perfidy. "In the first place," said he,  
 " I see in it measures relative to the King's  
 " person—measures equally necessary for  
 " his safety, and for the safety of the Na-  
 " tion. The King will soon arrive in Paris,  
 " and I cannot suppose that *M. Malouet*  
 " wishes to delay precautions of so import-  
 " ant a nature. With respect to the second  
 " part of the Decree relative to the provi-  
 " sional power of Government; these  
 " clauses, instead of carrying us from the  
 " principles of our Constitution, bring us  
 VOL. IV. N " back



“ back to them. According to these prin-  
“ ciples, during the existence of the Consti-  
“ tuent Power, the exercise of the Execu-  
“ tive Power ought to have been suspended  
“ in the hands of the King, because we  
“ were organizing the Throne. If incon-  
“ veniences in practice have prevented our  
“ declaring these principles hitherto, the  
“ present circumstances show the necessity  
“ of them. Let me bring back to your re-  
“ collection, what must ever be honourable  
“ to the National Assembly, that at the mo-  
“ ment when we heard of the King’s  
“ flight, and when it became necessary to  
“ provide for the safety of the Kingdom,  
“ the Assembly rejected the proposal of  
“ establishing an Executive Committee,  
“ proving that the most serious, urgent, and  
“ important events could produce no change  
“ in their principles. Sent hither to give a  
“ Constitution to France, we were of  
“ opinion that the extent of the country,  
“ and a population of five-and-twenty mil-  
“ lions, required an unity of power and  
“ action, which could only be found in a  
“ Monarchical form of Government. If  
“ this opinion were right a year ago, it is  
“ right now. Events have not altered the  
“ nature



“ nature of things, nor shall they alter our  
 “ conduct. We will continue to form the  
 “ Constitution: we will finish it. It will,  
 “ I hope, fulfill the wishes of the Nation,  
 “ and in producing their happiness be our  
 “ reward.”

The reiterated applauses which were bestowed upon this speech did not discourage *M. Malouet*. He insisted on being heard, in spite of the menacing hints thrown out to silence him; for he was repeatedly asked, *if he wished to get himself assassinated*. In answer to *Alexander Lameth*, he said—

“ That the Assembly had not received instructions, nor had it a right, to suspend  
 “ all the powers of the State; and that the  
 “ proposed measure was in direct contradiction to the principles they had hitherto  
 “ pursued. It is,” he repeated, “ a new  
 “ Constitution, a new form of Government,  
 “ that is offered to you. It is a project  
 “ only now conceived. You did not assume the Executive Power from the first.  
 “ By what right do you make yourselves  
 “ masters of it now? And is it not making  
 “ yourselves masters of it, to entrust it to  
 “ agents whom circumstances have placed



“ in the most absolute dependance upon  
“ you? Can that portion of power which  
“ consists in suspending the passing of a  
“ law, and which the Constitution you have  
“ decreed, and solemnly sworn to maintain,  
“ has lodged in the hands of the King, exist  
“ in the hands of Ministers, who are re-  
“ moveable at pleasure? Take care, Gentle-  
“ men, you are led much too far. The Na-  
“ tion itself may become alarmed at this  
“ accumulation of power; beware of the  
“ consequences.”

Notwithstanding the force of these arguments, which were only answered by menaces, revolutionary declamations, or unmeaning phrases, the majority of the Assembly being convinced that the measures proposed by the Committee had no other object than the safety of the Royal Family, and that they had no tendency to keeping the King a prisoner, adopted almost unanimously the two first articles of the plan. The others passed likewise, notwithstanding the opposition of *M. Malouet* to that also which stated, *that the declaration of the King and Queen should be heard.* He was answered, that this form was sanctioned by precedents  
and



and that history furnished many examples, where in criminal proceedings the King and Queen had made declarations. But not any of those examples were applicable ; for none of the proceedings in those cases tended to expose, as in this, the Royal dignity to a judiciary accusation.

In the mean time the King, Queen, and Royal Family, whose journey was delayed by the multitude, which was continually collecting about them, advanced slowly towards Paris, in the midst of the disgusting and fanatical clamours of some wretches whom the National Guards could hardly keep off. A thick cloud of dust, and a hot day rendered more oppressive by the offensive breath of the crowd, added an insufferable torment to the anguish of their Majesties' minds. The Queen, distressed for her children, let down one of the Venetian blinds, and addressing the people said, " See what a state my poor children are in ! We are stifled." Some ferocious voices made answer, "*We shall* "*stifle you in a very different way.*" At one time a very serious alarm arose from a great number of ill-looking fellows rushing through the crowd up to the King's carriage : it was whispered, that these were a band of assassins



posted by the Duke of *Orleans* to murder the King and Queen \*. The Commander of the escort soon dispersed these ruffians by means of some of the troops.

It was about seven o'clock in the evening when the Royal Family arrived at the Place *Louis XV.* The mortifications which they endured all the way from the barrier, announced too plainly the fate which was reserved for them.

All civil and military honours were refused them. The National Guards at the different posts before which the King passed, obeyed with insolence and exactness the orders they had received, not to present their arms: an order the more criminal, as it was contradictory to the decree of the night of June 22d, *relative to the maintenance of the respect due to the Royal dignity.* The

\* This was a groundless conjecture: it was generally known, that at this time the Duke of *Orleans*, who was entirely ruined, and despised by all parties, had not the means, and indeed had no interest, to effect the crime in question. He had even declared on the 21st and 22d of June to several Members of the Assembly, and repeated it on the 26th in a letter, which was inserted in all the journals, that if a Regency should be proposed, he renounced for ever the right which the Constitution gave him to that situation.

populace,



populace, encouraged by this example, brutally forced the spectators to keep their hats on in the King's presence; and the National Guards did not prevent this act of compulsion. But they could not intimidate the brave and worthy *Guilhermy* \*. He continued resolutely uncovered in spite of the insults and threats to which his resistance subjected him; and when he saw that the mob meant to compel him by force to put on his hat, he tossed it amidst the crowd, and to so great a distance, that there was no fear of its being brought back to him. This scene passed in the gardens of the Tuileries, into which the Royal Family had entered by the Place *Louis XV.*, in their way to the Palace.

The clamours and noisy tumult announced to the Assembly the King's arrival in the Gardens. In every part of the Hall there appeared great agitation, and business was suspended for near twenty minutes, when a Deputy entering precipitately, said, that the three couriers who were sitting on the coach-box of the King's carriage were surrounded by the people, and in danger of being hanged. The Assembly immediately sent twenty Com-

\* A Member of the Assembly, and the King's Attorney at Castelnau-dary.



missioners to establish order, who returned in less than a quarter of an hour, and informed them, that upon their appearing the tumult had ceased ; that at the door of the King's carriage they saw *Pethion*, who appeared endeavouring to screen him with his body ; and that the National Guard had cleared the way for the Royal Family.

Their Majesties alighted at the Terrace. The Viscount *de Noailles* being there, ran up to the Queen, and presented her his arm. Accustomed to preserve energy and dignity in the midst of outrages, she rejected with a look of ineffable contempt the protection which this Member of the *Coté-Gauche* had the impudence to offer her ; and perceiving two faithful Members of the *Coté-Droit*, she advanced towards them, and did them the honour to take their arms.

The three Commissioners who had been sent to meet the Royal Family having brought them back to the Palace, and having delivered their Majesties to the care of the Commander of the National Guard, went to the Assembly to give an account of their mission.

*Barnave*, who undertook the narrative, entered into a detail of the measures and precautions which the Commissioners had taken,



taken, to frustrate the attempts which were said to be in agitation for carrying off the King, or for preventing his return. He mentioned also the various directions which they had given, *that, according to the intention of the National Assembly, order, and the respect due to the Royal dignity might be constantly maintained.* He declared that the public tranquillity had never been disturbed, and that the Commissioners had every where received testimonies of entire confidence in the National Assembly.

The three *Gardes-du-Corps*, (*M. Valori, M. de Moutier, and M. Malsan*) who, disguised as couriers, had accompanied the Royal Family, were detained in custody in one of the rooms of the Palace. The Assembly decreed, that the Minister of War should give orders to the Magistrates of Paris to have them removed to a house of confinement. This decree was followed by a motion for disbanding the four companies of the *Gardes-du-Corps*, on the ground of their being more attached to the King than to the Country. *M. de Bonnai*, attempting to defend his comrades, was himself denounced by the Committee of Inquiry, who accused him of having the day after the departure of the  
Royal



Royal Family sent to the Groom of the King's Stables at Versailles for a horse, in order to fly from Paris at the time that the Assembly were manifesting such firmness. *M. de Bonnai* easily refuted this charge, by proving that he was in the country four leagues from Paris, when he was informed of the King's departure: that consequently he had not sent for the horse in order to fly, as he was not then at Paris, and as he returned thither the moment he was informed that the Assembly continued to hold their Sitting there. "We are charged," added he, "with being more attached to the King than to the Country. Now I declare that I consider the King and the Country as indivisible, and that, as I have sworn to die as well for the one as for the other, whichever called for my service I should obey. I should go wherever duty required, whether summoned by the King or by the Nation. Had the King called me to his Councils, I should have dissuaded him from his departure; but had he chosen me to attend him, I repeat, that I would have died by his side, and gloried in my death."

This declaration, which was pronounced with a firm voice, and at a time when it was dangerous



dangerous to profess himself a Royalist, excited as much murmuring in the *Coté-Gauche* as applause in the *Coté-Droit*. It probably hastened the disbanding of the *Gardes-du-Corps*\*; but it gained at least the advantage of rendering the last moments of their military existence illustrious, by the solemn profession of sentiments replete with honour and fidelity, for which they had always been distinguished.

The business of the Assembly was suspended at eleven o'clock that night, and resumed the next morning at ten, when they proceeded to the report delivered in the name of the Committee of the Constitution and of the Criminal Legislation, upon the manner of executing the decree passed the evening before, relative to arresting and examining the persons who had accompanied the Royal Family, and to the proceedings that should be adopted on the occasion.

After long debates, in which the Republican party shewed evidently the design of bringing the King to a trial, the Constitutionalists, supported by the Members of the

\* The Assembly decreed the disbanding in this Sitting, and charged the Military Committee to draw up a plan of a decree for the purpose.



*Coté-Droit*, who took a share in the decision, carried the decree which was proposed by the Committees. It was worded as follows :

Art. I. “ The National Assembly decree,  
“ that upon the event which happened on  
“ the night between the 20th and 21st of  
“ June, and upon all the facts before and  
“ after relative to it, an inquiry shall be  
“ made wherever it may be judged necessary  
“ by the tribunal of the section of the  
“ Tuileries, who shall appoint for that purpose  
“ two Commissioners from among  
“ themselves.

Art. II. “ The said Commissioners shall  
“ proceed without delay to examine all  
“ those persons who have been arrested in  
“ consequence of the decree of the 25th of  
“ this month ; and likewise all other witnesses  
“ who on the examination may appear  
“ to be necessary.

Art. III. “ The National Assembly shall  
“ nominate three of its Members as Commissioners  
“ to receive the Declarations of  
“ the King and Queen. These declarations  
“ shall be received separately from the King  
“ and Queen’s own mouths, committed to  
“ paper,



“ paper, and signed by them and by the  
 “ Commissioners. The whole shall be re-  
 “ ported to the Assembly, that they may  
 “ adopt such measures as shall be judged  
 “ proper.”

While the Assembly continued sitting, the Members in succession retired to the offices to proceed to the nomination of the three Commissioners who were to receive the declarations of their Majesties.

In this interval, *George*, the Mayor of Varennes, and some National Guards, with the son of the Mayor, who was their commander, were introduced to the Bar. The Mayor in his harangue pointed out, among the patriots who formed this deputation, two persons named *Le Blanc* and *Poncin*, who were crowned with oak leaves. These were the two villains who stopped the King by threatening to fire into the coach. *Alexander de Beauharnois*, the President, highly extolled their patriotism and *admirable conduct*. “ Varennes,” said he, “ will be so celebrated, that all France will be proud of such a town. The National Assembly request you to assure all its inhabitants, that they are thoroughly sensible of the  
 2 “ services



“ services they have rendered the country ;  
“ and you may also assure them, that their  
“ grateful countrymen would hasten to as-  
“ semble under their walls, if the satellites  
“ of Despotism should dare to approach  
“ them.” Notwithstanding these promises  
and assurances, it is more than probable that  
the day will come, and perhaps it is not very  
distant, when the infamous borough of Va-  
rennes and its guilty inhabitants, become the  
objects of the execration of all France, shall  
have occasion for all the clemency of the  
King, and for his whole power, to save them  
from the just fury of the people. In the  
election of the three Commissioners to re-  
ceive the King and Queen’s declaration,  
599 members voted : of these a great ma-  
jority were for the appointment of *M. Tron-*  
*chet*, *M. d’André*, and *Adrian Duport*.  
These three Members of the Constitutional  
party had principally contributed to the  
passing of the decree proposed by the Com-  
mittees.

This memorable Sitting, which commenced  
on Tuesday the 21st of June, at half past  
eight o’clock in the morning, was at length  
adjourned on Sunday the 26th, at half past  
three in the afternoon.

On



On the same day the three Commissioners of the Assembly, preceded by two Ushers, went to the Palace about seven o'clock in the evening, and were introduced to the King, whom they found alone. They read the decree of the Assembly to his Majesty, and informed him that the Declaration which they were employed to receive must refer to the circumstances which happened on the night between the 20th and 21st of June, as well as to the facts before and after relative to it. The King replied, that he did not mean to submit to an examination; but that he consented to explain the facts which were mentioned to him.

After this observation, the King dictated the Declaration which the Commissioners required, and of which they made a minute in the following terms:

“ I find, Gentlemen, that an examination  
 “ is out of the question in your commission;  
 “ but I am very willing to comply with  
 “ the desire of the National Assembly, and  
 “ shall never be afraid of making the mo-  
 “ tives of my conduct public.

“ The motives of my departure then are,  
 “ the outrages and threats received on the

“ 18th



“ 18th of April by my family and myself;  
“ after which several pamphlets were pub-  
“ lished to excite violence against us—and to  
“ this moment these insults remain unpun-  
“ ished. From that time I thought that  
“ neither safety nor common decency was  
“ to be expected by my family or myself if  
“ we continued at Paris: I consequently  
“ wished to leave the town; and not being  
“ able to do it publicly, I resolved to set out  
“ at night, and without attendants.

“ It was not my intention to go out of  
“ the kingdom. I did not concert this  
“ plan either with foreign powers or with  
“ my relations, or with any other French-  
“ man who had left the kingdom. I might  
“ give as a proof of my intention, that apart-  
“ ments were prepared at Montmedy for the  
“ reception of myself and family.

“ I chose that place, because, as it was forti-  
“ fied, my family would have been safe there;  
“ and being near the frontiers, I should  
“ have been more at hand to oppose every  
“ sort of invasion that might be attempted  
“ on France, and to go myself wherever I  
“ might think there was any danger.

“ Lastly, I chose Montmedy as the first  
“ place to rest in, till I should have found it

“ con-



“ convenient to go to such other part of the  
 “ kingdom as might appear to me more  
 “ suitable.

“ One of my principal motives for quit-  
 “ ting Paris, *was to overthrow the argu-*  
 “ *ment drawn from my not being at liberty,*  
 “ *which might become a fresh source of*  
 “ *commotion.*

“ If it had been my intention to go out  
 “ of the kingdom, I should not have pub-  
 “ lished my memorial on the very day of  
 “ my departure, but have waited till I was  
 “ beyond the frontiers.

“ I cherished the desire of returning to  
 “ Paris. It is in this sense that the last sen-  
 “ tence of my memorial must be under-  
 “ stood, where I say, *Frenchmen, and par-*  
 “ *ticularly you Parisians, what pleasure*  
 “ *shall I have in being again in the midst*  
 “ *of you!*

“ I carried with me only 13,000 livres in  
 “ gold, and 56,000 livres in assignats in the  
 “ port folio which was sent to me by the  
 “ Department.

“ I apprised MONSIEUR of my depar-  
 “ ture but a very short time previous to its  
 “ taking place. He went out of the king-  
 “ dom, only because we agreed not to take



“ the same road, and he was afterwards to  
“ join me in France.

“ I gave orders a few days before my de-  
“ parture to the three persons who went  
“ with me as couriers to prepare themselves  
“ with the dress of couriers to carry dis-  
“ patches; it was not till the evening of my  
“ setting out that I verbally gave directions  
“ to one of them to get ready.

“ The passport was necessary to facilitate  
“ my journey. It was taken for a foreign  
“ country, only because none were given at  
“ the office for foreign affairs for the inte-  
“ rior of the kingdom, nor did I take the  
“ road for Frankfort as mentioned in it.

“ I never made any protest but that con-  
“ tained in the Memorial I wrote at my de-  
“ parture: and that protest and the contents  
“ of the Memorial *do not refer to the prin-*  
“ *ciples of the Constitution, but to the form*  
“ *of the sanctions, that is to say, to the*  
“ *little liberty I seemed to enjoy, and to the*  
“ *circumstances of the decrees not being all*  
“ *présentés together, so that I could not*  
“ *judge of the whole of the Constitution.*

“ The principal blame contained in the  
“ Memorial refers to the difficulties in the  
“ means of administration and execution.



*“ I found in the course of my journey that  
“ the public opinion was decidedly in fa-  
“ vour of the Constitution. I did not  
“ think that I could have fully acquainted  
“ myself with this opinion in Paris; but  
“ from the ideas I have personally acquired  
“ on the road, I am convinced how necessary  
“ it was for the prosperity of the Constitu-  
“ tion to give force to the powers esta-  
“ blished to maintain public order.*

*“ The moment I was satisfied that it was  
“ the general will, I did not hesitate, nor  
“ did I ever hesitate, to make a sacrifice of  
“ all that individually concerned myself to  
“ the happiness of the people, which has  
“ ever been the first object of my wishes.  
“ I shall willingly forget all the disagree-  
“ able things I have experienced, to restore  
“ the peace and tranquillity of the Nation.”*

The King, on reading over this Declaration, observed, “ that he had omitted to say  
“ that his son’s governess and her woman  
“ had been desired to get ready but a very  
“ short time before his departure.” He  
then signed it with the Commissioners.

From the King the Commissioners went



to the Queen's apartment ; but she was just gone to bathe, and sent to inform them that she would receive them at eleven o'clock next morning. They returned at the hour appointed, and her Majesty gave them her Declaration in the same form as the King had given his, and in the following words :

“ I declare, that as the King desired to  
“ remove with his children, nothing in na-  
“ ture should have prevented me from ac-  
“ companying him. I have on several oc-  
“ casions within the last two years suffi-  
“ ciently proved that I never will leave him.  
“ This determination was still stronger, from  
“ the positive assurance I had that the King  
“ had no intention to quit the kingdom.  
“ Had it been his desire, I should have em-  
“ ployed all my power to dissuade him from  
“ it.

“ My son's governess had been indisposed  
“ for three weeks, and received orders to  
“ get ready but a very little time before the  
“ journey. She did not know where we  
“ were going. She took no clothes with  
“ her, and I was myself obliged to lend her  
“ some.

“ Neither



“ Neither did the three couriers know  
“ where we were going, or the object of the  
“ journey. On the way, money was given  
“ to them to pay for the horses, and they  
“ then received orders as to the road. The  
“ two chambermaids were informed at the  
“ very moment of our departure, and one of  
“ them, whose husband was in the palace,  
“ had not time to see him.

“ MONSIEUR and MADAME were to join  
“ us in France, and only went out of the  
“ kingdom to prevent any difficulty or want  
“ of horses in taking the same road. We  
“ went out of the Palace through *M. de*  
“ *Villequier's* apartments, taking the pre-  
“ caution to go separately, and at certain in-  
“ tervals of time\*.”

Neither the profound veneration which I feel for the virtues of *Louis XVI.* nor the religious respect with which his misfortunes have veiled his errors, must tempt me to conceal that his faithful servants, the true friends of his glory and of his dignity, read with extreme sorrow in his declarations some passages, the sincerity of which it was impos-

\* See the original of the two Declarations, Appendix, No. xx.



sible not to suspect\*. The mouths of Kings should be at all times, and in all circumstances, the purest organs of truth and good faith. But in making these reflections, which will certainly be considered as severe, let me proclaim, that the passages of the King's declaration, which give rise to them, did not originate with his Majesty. They were sent to him by the leaders of the Constitutional party, who saw no other means of averting the design, which began to be openly talked of, of bringing their Majesties to a trial. I may farther add, that had not this execrable design been equally directed against the Queen, the King would have been offended with any one who should have dared to counsel him to make such a declaration; and never would have consented to belie his sentiments and his conscience, in order to escape a danger that threatened only himself. The Commissioners on leaving the Queen went to the Assembly, and there read their minutes, containing these declarations. Several expressions in that of the King drew from the *Coté-Gauche* indecent exclamations, and rude bursts of laughter. That of the Queen

\* The passages alluded to are printed in Italics.



was still oftener interrupted by murmurs.— Both were deposited in the archives, to be produced when wanted by the Committee charged with the general report of this affair.

The last Sitzings of the month of June were almost wholly employed either in receiving different Deputations, sent on the late events to testify to the Assembly fidelity, respect, admiration, and so forth; or in reading patriotic letters, and addresses from Departments, Municipalities, and Clubs, expressive of the same sentiments. In the number of the letters, one from the Count *d'Estaing* was observed to be among the most ridiculous. Being confined to his room by some complaint, and not choosing to leave the least doubt of his ardour to take the new oath, he was not content with sending it to his Section, but addressed it to the Assembly in a letter, which he concluded thus:—*As Lieutenant-General and Vice-Admiral, I serve my Country by land and sea—Oh! that there were another element in which I could fight for the Constitution, and acquit myself of all the duties of a Citizen!*



The reading of these disgusting flatteries was interrupted, to attend to a letter from the Magistrates of the Department of Ardennes, and to a copy of some of the minutes of the district of Montmedy, relative to the arrest of three Officers of the Regiment of *Royal-Allemand*. To the minutes were annexed several papers found upon them. The most remarkable was an order from the King, signifying, “ That, as his  
“ Majesty intended to be at Montmedy on  
“ the 20th of June, *M. de Bouillé* was or-  
“ dered to station troops in the properest  
“ places, upon the road from Chalons  
“ on the Marne to Montmedy, for the  
“ safety of the King and his Family, and  
“ that he was answerable for the orders he  
“ should give.”

The papers, which shewed clearly that the King had no intention of going farther than Montmedy, were referred to the Committee. With regard to the Officers who had been arrested, the Assembly decreed, that they should be immediately removed to Paris; but the consideration of the danger they might be exposed to on the road, at a moment when the people were in the most  
violent



violent fermentation, induced them to revoke this Decree. It was ordered, that they should remain in the place where they were arrested, if it was secure, or removed to the nearest town\*.

Some of the addressees sent to the Assembly on this occasion, particularly that from the Department of *Laisne*, expressed a wish that the education of the Dauphin should be trusted to a Governor appointed by the Assembly, *to save him from the corruption of Courts*; and the Committee of the Constitution had been charged to propose a system of moral and political education for the Heir Apparent; but this important work, which certainly merited the greatest consideration, was not yet begun. It was much easier to decide upon the mode of executing the Decree by which the Assembly had empowered themselves to appoint the Governor for the Dauphin. There were, notwithstanding, great debates upon this occasion; and principally upon the question, whether

\* Before this second Decree arrived at Verdun, the Magistrates of the Department of Ardennes had already sent off the Officers for Paris.



the members of the Assembly should be eligible or not ; and it was not till after a long discussion that the following articles were decreed :

“ Art. 1. Before the Assembly proceed to  
“ the nomination of a Governor, who shall  
“ be appointed provisionally, to the Pre-  
“ sumptive Heir of the Crown, a list shall  
“ be made out of the Citizens who appear  
“ proper for this office.

“ Art. 2. To form the list, the members  
“ of the Assembly shall retire into the dif-  
“ ferent office-rooms, and proceed to ballot.  
“ The names of those balloted for in each  
“ office shall be delivered to two Secretaries,  
“ and a list of all who obtained votes shall  
“ be reported to the Assembly and  
“ printed.

“ Art. 3. The election shall be made in-  
“ dividually, and by the majority of votes.  
“ Votes may be given, not only for persons  
“ on the list, but for all other Citizens,  
“ except the members of the present As-  
“ sembly.

“ Art. 4. The Governor, in the presence of  
“ the National Assembly, shall take an oath  
“ to



“ to the Nation, to attend religiously to the  
“ preservation of the life and health of the  
“ Heir Apparent, and shall answer for his  
“ person.”

The other articles of the plan proposed by the Committee were adjourned.

These factious, barbarous, and insolent men were not satisfied with having deprived *Louis XVI.* of all the rights and of all the functions of Royalty; with confining him; with having subjected him to the humiliation of giving an account of his conduct to Commissioners; and with having exposed him to the gross insults of the populace: they determined also to deprive him of that sacred right which nature and every law human and divine have bestowed upon all fathers, that of rearing and educating their children, and of trusting them only to persons of their own choice.

This discussion shocked the members of the *Coté-Droit* to such a degree, that they could no longer preserve that mournful silence which they had imposed upon themselves since the King's arrest. One of them (the Marquis *de Foucault Lardimale*) declared, that he should think himself most criminal,



criminal, if he took the least part in this decision, or in the election which the Assembly proposed to take upon themselves. *And so should I*, cried at once all the worthy Representatives of the French Nobility.

How painful must it have been for them, in so critical a moment, to see themselves reduced to a situation in which it was absolutely impossible for them to give the King any other proof of being devoted to him, than that of annihilating themselves in a manner, lest they should augment his danger by undertaking his defence, or oppose his intentions from not knowing them! for his Majesty never opened his mind to them, and thus, by not directing their zeal, lost the important services which they might have rendered him. It must also be observed, that from the end of July 1789 it became impossible for the King to have the least communication direct or private with any member of the Assembly, and especially with the Deputies of the Nobility. It would have immediately marked them as *sold to the Court and Despotism; as Conspirators*, and so forth: and this fatal distinction would have exposed them continually to attacks from the mob, which the word *Aristocrat*



*crat* enabled them to make with impunity. Indirect communications were likewise as impracticable; because they would have required intermediate agents in whom complete confidence could be placed; and it was as difficult for *Louis XVI.* to find such men at Court, as to seek them elsewhere. But, indeed, the passive and silent part adopted by the members of the *Coté-Droit*, after the arrest of the Royal Family, was certainly the most essential service they could render their Majesties. If they had acted, if they had spoken, they would have increased the irritation of the people, and the power of the Republican party, who wished to bring the King to a trial. Upon this occasion, they concerted their plan of conduct with the leaders of the Constitutional party, who wished to save the King, but who neither would nor could do it without having the strongest assurance that the *Coté-Droit* would take no part in the debate, but confine themselves to voting for their plan of decree when put to the vote. Nothing less than a crisis so dangerous for the Royal Family could induce the pure Royalists to form a temporary union with the Factious, who had overturned the Throne, to establish upon



its ruins their pretended Monarchical Constitution ; and who wished to preserve the King merely to maintain it, and to prevent the Republican party from triumphing.

During this negotiation between the Constitutionalists and the Royalists, *M. de Bouillé*, who had fled to Luxembourg, dismayed at the disastrous issue of the departure of the Royal Family for Montmedy, and shuddering with horror at the idea of the crimes which might be the consequence of this unhappy event, endeavoured to give it a turn favourable to their Majesties, and to draw the whole rage of the Jacobins and of the People upon himself alone. For this purpose he wrote his celebrated letter to the Assembly, in which he declared that he was the sole author and instigator of the King's departure\* ; and that he could not prevail upon the King to leave Paris, but by persuading him that it was the only means by which he could save France from the civil and foreign war with which it was threatened.

This letter, which was read to the Assembly on the 30th of June, contained the

\* See Appendix, No. xxi.



justest censure upon their conduct, but in the most violent style, and concluded with threats too extravagant to alarm those to whom they were addressed, who turned them into ridicule, and regarded them as mere bravadoes. It is certain, however, that this letter made a very general impression in favour of the King, on the minds of those who were the most exasperated against him, which was the end *M. de Bouillé* had chiefly in view when he wrote it.



## CHAPTER XLIII.

*Incendiary Writings and Placards denounced to the Assembly—Ridiculous List of Persons to fill the Office of Governor to the Dauphin—Declaration of the Members of the Côté-Droit—Remarkable Letter from the Abbé Sieyes—Criminal Conduct of M. de la Fayette in respect to the Royal Family—He is denounced to the Assembly, who pass to the Order of the Day—Friendly Note from the King of Spain to the Assembly relative to the Situation of Louis XVI—The Insolence with which this Note is treated—Removal of Voltaire's Body to the Pantheon—Report of the Committees relative to the King's departure for Montmedy—Debates between the Republican Party and the Constitutional Party, the latter of whom declare in the King's favour—Manœuvres*



*vres of the Jacobins—The Constitutional Party prevail—Decree—Rage of the Jacobin Club—They enter into a Resolution to acknowledge the King no longer—Riot—Places of public Amusement shut up—Several Deputies insulted—Denunciation of these Excesses to the Assembly.*

WHILE the united Committees of the Assembly \* were preparing their report on the events of the 21st of June, the people, in a state of continual agitation, stimulated by a multitude of incendiary writings, by the most furious orators, and by all the manœuvres of the Republican party, thought themselves authorised to anticipate the judgment of their Representatives upon this pretended conspiracy. Their wish for the abolition of Royalty was clamorously expressed by all the groups assembled at the *Palais-Royal*, and by numberless placards stuck up on the very doors and in the passages of the Assembly.—*M. Malouet* seeing one of these papers as he entered the Hall, tore it down, and, carrying

\* Seven in number, viz. Military, Diplomatic, of the Constitution, of Revision, of Criminal Jurisprudence, of Reports, and of Inquiry.



it in, denounced it. He moved the Assembly to give orders instantly to the Public Accuser, to the Administrative Bodies, and to the Courts to which the cognizance of similar crimes belonged, to prosecute the authors of this placard. All the members of the *Coté-Droit* rose at once to support the motion.—The advocate *Martineau* moved, that those who had signed the paper should be immediately arrested. Being interrupted by violent murmurs from the *Coté-Gauche*, and by some voices calling for the order of the day, he cried with indignation—“How! the order of the day!”—“To the *Abbaye*! To the *Abbaye*!” cried they. “It is infamous,” he replied, “to leave such crimes unpunished.” *Petion* represented, that if they attended to such denunciations, similar ones would be made every day. *Chabroud*, who in his report on the crimes of the 6th of October 1789 had found no blame but in the *Gardes-du-Corps*, could only perceive in the denounced paper a trifling act of folly or delirium beneath the attention of the Assembly, who ought not, by hearing and discussing such productions, to lose the time they should bestow on finishing the Constitution, and accelerating the happiness of the people. He therefore supported

1



supported the motion for passing to the order of the day. The Galleries by the most lively applauses showed that they were of the same opinion, and the Assembly adopted it.

In the following Sitting the result of the ballot preparatory to the nomination of a Governor for the Dauphin was read. The number of persons returned as worthy of the office amounted to 92. This list, drawn up in alphabetical order, brought together characters so heterogeneous and ridiculous, that it created a great deal of laughter. It was composed of Lawyers, Doctors, Commanders of the battalions of the Parisian National Guard, ancient Magistrates, Poets, *Procureurs-Syndics* of the Departments, Judges, Directors of Colleges, Monks, Dramatic Authors, &c. &c. The name of the Prince *de Conti* was also found in it, as was that of the Duke of *Harcourt*, between those of two Advocates-General, (*Guiron de Morveaux*, and *Heraut de Sechelles*;) that of *M. Malesherbis* was next to that of the Treasurer of the Highways, and that of *Noel* the Editor of a Revolutionary Journal, between those of Mr. *Necker* and *M. d'Ormesson*; but the name that created the greatest agita-



tion was that of the Marquis *de Bouillé*. The members of the *Coté-Gauche* could not restrain their rage. “He who dared to offer that name,” cried *Rezebell*, “deserves to be expelled the Legislative Body.” The Assembly ordered the name of *M. de Bouillé* to be erased, and adjourned the final ballot for a fortnight. This adjournment was judged necessary, on account of the sarcasms and ridicule which the list could not fail to excite.

Very different was the list of the members of the *Coté-Droit*, who published, at the same period, declarations, the object of which was to manifest their sentiments, and the motives of their silence in the Assembly. It is the part of history to collect these honourable acts, as so many monuments of courage and fidelity. One of these declarations, graced with 290 signatures, was couched in the following terms :

“ In the midst of the insults offered to  
“ the Monarch and to his august Family,  
“ and in their persons to the Nation at  
“ large, what is the Monarchy become?  
“ The Decrees of the National Assembly  
“ have concentrated in themselves the  
“ whole



“ whole Regal Authority : the State Seal  
 “ has been laid upon their table ; their De-  
 “ crees are to be put in execution, without  
 “ requiring the sanction ; they give direct  
 “ orders to all the Agents of the Executive  
 “ Power ; they cause oaths to be admini-  
 “ stered in their name, in which Frenchmen  
 “ no longer find even the name of their  
 “ King ; Commissioners appointed by them  
 “ alone, are going through the Provinces  
 “ to administer the oaths they exact, and to  
 “ give orders to the Army : thus, at the  
 “ moment that the inviolability of the sacred  
 “ person of the Monarch was annihilated,  
 “ the Monarchy was destroyed ; even the  
 “ appearance of Royalty no longer exists ;  
 “ a Republican interregnum is substituted in  
 “ its stead.

“ Far be it from those who know the  
 “ rules of our conduct, and we dare hope  
 “ that there are few Frenchmen who are  
 “ not satisfied with them, to imagine that  
 “ we could have consented to those Decrees !  
 “ They are not only contrary to our princi-  
 “ ples, but they grieve our hearts. Never  
 “ did we more painfully feel the rigour of  
 “ our duty, or more lament the fatal conse-



“ quences drawn from the mission with  
“ which we are charged, than when we  
“ were compelled to witness acts which ap-  
“ peared criminal outrages to us ; than  
“ when our chief speakers, become timid,  
“ for the first time, were compelled to con-  
“ demn themselves to silence, that they  
“ might not involve so sacred a cause in  
“ the contumely our adversaries have but  
“ too well succeeded in casting upon us.

“ Before the disastrous period at which  
“ we are arrived, we could at least embrace  
“ the phantom of the Monarchy ; we com-  
“ bated for its wrecks, and the hope of  
“ preserving it justified our endeavours.—  
“ Now, the last blow has been given to  
“ the Monarchy ; but, deprived of this great  
“ motive, duties of another kind present  
“ themselves. The Monarch exists—He is  
“ a captive. It is for the interest of the  
“ King we must rally ; it is for him, for  
“ his family—it is for the loved blood of  
“ the *Bourbons*, that we should remain at  
“ a post where we may watch over so pre-  
“ cious a deposit. We will, therefore, still  
“ perform this sacred duty, which alone  
“ must be our excuse ; and we will thus  
“ prove



“ prove that in our hearts the Monarch and  
“ the Monarchy are inseparable from each  
“ other.

“ But while we perform this urgent duty,  
“ let not our Constituents expect that we  
“ shall interfere in any subject foreign to it.  
“ When a single interest can force us to sit  
“ with those who have erected an irregu-  
“ lar Republic upon the ruins of the  
“ Monarchy, it is to that single interest we  
“ devote ourselves entirely. From this  
“ moment a profound silence on whatever is  
“ not relative to it will mark our sorrow,  
“ and be at the same time the only expres-  
“ sion of our constant opposition to all the  
“ decrees.

“ Consequently, we shall continue, from  
“ the sole motive of not abandoning the in-  
“ terests of the King's person and those of  
“ the Royal Family, to attend the delibera-  
“ tions of the National Assembly; but as  
“ we cannot approve their principles, nor  
“ acknowledge the lawfulness of their de-  
“ crees, we shall henceforth take no part in  
“ deliberations which do not relate solely  
“ to those interests which remain for us to  
“ defend.”



In the Sitting of the 5th of July, *M. de Foucault* attempted to read this declaration; but at the first words he was interrupted by cries and murmurs so violent, that the President could not put an end to them but by breaking up the Sitting. Those that signed this declaration then determined to make it public by printing it; and they caused a vast number of copies to be distributed in the Capital and in the Provinces\*. The general approbation which it obtained, proved a protection against the fury of the Republican Party, and against all their efforts to excite the severity of the Assembly against this step. *Reubell*, being called to order some days after in the discussion of a plan for a decree against the Emigrants†, angrily answered: “ I am found fault with for one unguarded  
“ word, while nothing is said of a produc-  
“ tion I hold in my hand, which is dis-  
“ tributed every where, and which contains  
“ principles the most destructive to the so-

\* At this period *M. de Bonnai*, *M. de Serent*, *M. de Cazalès*, and *M. Montlosier* vacated their seats,

† Sitting of the 9th of July.—It was decreed, that the Emigrants not returning in the course of a month should pay triple taxes for the year 1791.

“ verieignty



“verignty of the Nation. I speak of the  
 “declaration made by several Members of  
 “this Assembly.” Although this denunci-  
 ation was several times applauded by the  
 Members of the *Coté-Gauche* and by the  
 Galleries, the Assembly had the prudence  
 not to take it up.

At the same time that the declarations of  
 the loyal Deputies fixed the public attention,  
 and interested every honest man, by showing  
 them the principles and sentiments in which  
 all good Frenchmen should unite, the Abbé  
*Sieyes*, being accused in some pamphlets of  
 having changed his opinion, and of endea-  
 vouring to draw over partisans to the Re-  
 publican system, published his Monarchical  
 principles, and the grounds of them, in a let-  
 ter which he sent to the newspapers\*. His  
 conduct since renders this letter so remark-  
 able, that I cannot dispense with reporting  
 its principal passages:

“It is said by many that I am taking ad-  
 “vantage of our present situation to em-  
 “brace Republicanism. Hitherto no one

\* See the *Moniteur* of Wednesday the 6th of July 1791,  
 under the article *Variétés*.

“has



“ has ever thought of accusing me of too  
“ much flexibility in my principles, or  
“ of changing my opinion easily, to suit  
“ the fashion of the times. Honest men,  
“ to whom alone I can address myself, have  
“ but three ways of judging of the senti-  
“ ments of any person; by his actions, his  
“ words, and his writings. I offer these  
“ three kinds of proof. *It is not to flatter*  
“ *ancient customs, nor through any super-*  
“ *stitious regard to Royalty, that I prefer*  
“ *Monarchy. I prefer it because it is clear*  
“ *to me, that the citizen enjoys more liberty*  
“ *under a Monarchy than in a Republic.*  
“ *Every other motive of preference appears*  
“ *puerile to me. The best social system, in*  
“ *my opinion, is that by which not one, or*  
“ *only a few, but all tranquilly enjoy the*  
“ *greatest possible latitude of liberty. If I*  
“ *discern this character in the Monarchical*  
“ *state, it is clear that I ought to prefer it*  
“ *above all others. This is the whole secret*  
“ *of my principles and my profession of faith*  
“ *fairly laid before you. I shall perhaps soon*  
“ *have time to discuss this question—and I*  
“ *hope to prove, not that Monarchy is pre-*  
“ *ferable in any particular circumstances,*  
“ *but*



*“ but that in every case men are freer  
 “ under it than in a Republic\*.”*

Meanwhile the Royal Family, shut up  
 in the Tuileries †, and surrounded night and  
 day

\* On repand beaucoup que je profite dans ce moment  
 de notre position pour tourner au Republicanisme.  
 Jusqu'à présent on ne s'étoit pas avisé de m'accuser de trop  
 de flexibilité dans mes principes, ni de changer facilement  
 d'opinion au gré du temps. Pour les hommes de bonne  
 foi, les seuls auxquels je puisse m'adresser, il n'y a que  
 trois moyens de juger des sentimens de quelqu'un ; ses  
 actions, ses paroles, et ses écrits. J'offre ces trois sortes  
 de preuves. Ce n'est ni pour caresser d'anciennes habitudes,  
 ni par aucun sentiment superstitieux de Royalisme que je  
 préfère la Monarchie. Je la préfère parcequ'il m'est dé-  
 montré qu'il y a plus de liberté pour le citoyen dans la Mo-  
 narchie que dans la République. Tout autre motif de déter-  
 mination me paroît puérile. Le meilleur regime social est,  
 à mon avis, celui où non pas un, non pas quelques-uns seule-  
 ment, mais où tous jouissent tranquillement de la plus grande  
 latitude de liberté possible. Si j'apperçois ce caractère dans  
 l'état Monarchique, il est clair que je dois le vouloir par  
 dessus tout autre. Voilà tout le secret de mes principes, et ma  
 profession de foi bien faite. J'aurai peut-être bientôt le temps  
 de développer cette question—et j'espère prouver, non que la  
 Monarchie est préférable dans telle ou telle position, mais que  
 dans toutes les hypotheses on y est plus libre que dans la  
 République.”

† The Dauphin alone was permitted to go out. The  
 National



day by a numerous guard, in whom they could see but jailors and spies in regimentals, found the rigours of their captivity aggravated by new precautions, as barbarous as they were useless. None but the Members of the Assembly had a right of entering the Palace without the permission of *M. de la Fayette*, and they were obliged to show their tickets, as Deputies, to the guard. The Members of the *Coté-Droit* used this privilege as often as possible. They saw with a melancholy satisfaction how much their Majesties were pleased at it. The Royal Family appeared in seeing them to forget all their troubles, and to find in their looks the consolation of hope. *M. de la Fayette* was pleased to take umbrage at this; and upon his own authority gave orders to the Guard to refuse the Deputies entrance into the Tuileries, even if they showed their tickets. His friends justified this order by saying, that it was given because some Deputies lent their cards to sus-

National Guard presented arms to him. The People saluted him as he passed; and repeated this sentence which had been dictated to them: *It is the Son; it is not the Father.*

pected



peccated persons; and that several Members  
 of the Assembly had often remained so late  
 at the Tuileries as to alarm the National  
 Guard. This insolent order was announced  
 to the Assembly by the President, in the  
 Sitting of the 10th of July, and excited as  
 much indignation in the Members of the  
*Coté-Droit*, as it did joy among the Members  
 of the *Coté-Gauche*. *So much the better!*  
*It was very proper!* cried the latter. “I  
 “think,” said M. d’Ambly, “that it is  
 “beneath the dignity of the Assembly to  
 “receive orders from any one: if they  
 “choose that their Members should not  
 “enter the Tuileries, they have but to de-  
 “cree it.” M. Malouet was more vehe-  
 ment in declaiming against this outrage:  
 “What does this order mean?” said he.  
 “Are we not permitted to go to the King?”  
 He was answered, “No, no.” “By what  
 “right, by what authority? I, for one, will  
 “go.” Several Members of the *Coté-*  
*Droit* expressed the same sentiment with  
 equal warmth. “I move,” said M. de  
 Montlosier, “that M. de la Fayette be  
 “ordered to the bar, to give an account of  
 “his conduct. He shall be responsible for  
 “the outrages offered to the King and his  
 “august



“ august Family. I undertake to prosecute  
“ him. It is shocking that sentinels should  
“ be placed upon the very roof of the  
“ Palace.” The most noisy clamours and  
murmurs prevented him from saying more;  
and the Assembly decreed, that it was not  
*M. de Montlosier’s* turn to speak, and  
passed to the order of the day.

*M. Malouet’s* exclamation was, and will  
remain for ever, a bitter and unanswerable  
argument against *M. de la Fayette* and his  
panegyrists, if he still has any. In fact, *by*  
*what right, by what authority*, did this Ge-  
neral of the Bourgeois Militia, converting  
the Palace of our King into a prison, dare to  
keep the Royal Family closely confined, to  
constitute himself their Majesties’ jailer, and  
to take upon him to multiply vexations in-  
sults, and indignities, which even the jailer  
of the Bicêtre would not have dared to inflict  
on his prisoners without orders from his  
superiors? Whence then had *M. de la Fay-*  
*ette* his orders and powers? He had never  
any but those contained in the first, second,  
and fourth articles of the decree of the 25th  
of June; and by them a guard was to be  
appointed for the King, the Queen, and the  
Dauphin; *which guard, under the orders of*  
*the*



the Commander-in-Chief, were to attend to the safety of their Majesties, and to be responsible for their persons. The responsibility imposed upon this guard did not even reach *M. de la Fayette*: he might doubtless have joined them, but he ought not, at least only so far as to secure, according to the decree passed in the night between the 22d and 23d of June, the maintenance of *the respect and regard due to the Royal dignity*. Neither ought he to have forgotten that the Assembly, far from intending to make the Royal Family prisoners by the decree of the 25th of June, had been generally shocked at the bare idea of *holding their Majesties in a state of arrest*; and that these last expressions which escaped from *Roederer*, had excited a general cry of indignation against him. Such was the duty of the Commander of the National Guard. What can ever justify his exceeding it in so criminal a manner? The Assembly ought certainly to have punished him for it when his new order was denounced to them; and in passing to the order of the day they did not extenuate *M. de la Fayette's* crime, they only augmented the number of his accomplices.

The



The order of the day in this Sitting was to insult crowned heads, as grossly as audaciously. We may judge, by the reception given by the Assembly to the friendly note which the King of Spain sent to them relative to the situation of *Louis XVI.* and the Royal Family. This note, delivered by the Spanish Ambassador to *M. de Montmorin*, to be communicated to the Assembly from his Catholic Majesty, was couched in these terms :

“ The retreat of the most Christian King  
“ and his family from Paris, and his de-  
“ signs, although still unknown to his Ca-  
“ tholic Majesty, might and cannot but  
“ have been occasioned by the necessity of  
“ delivering himself from the insults of the  
“ populace, which the present Assembly and  
“ the Municipality have not been able to  
“ prevent or to punish, and the intention of  
“ seeking a place of safety, where the So-  
“ vereign and the true and legitimate Repre-  
“ sentatives of the Nation might hold their  
“ deliberations with that liberty of which  
“ they had hitherto been deprived ; of  
“ which there are incontestable proofs.  
“ It is in this sense, in that of the most in-  
“ timate



“ timate Ally of France, of a near relation  
 “ and friend of her King, and as her nearest  
 “ neighbour, that his Majesty takes the  
 “ greatest interest in the happiness and in-  
 “ ternal tranquillity of the French Nation ;  
 “ and that, far from having a thought of  
 “ disturbing them, he has taken the resolu-  
 “ tion of exhorting the French ; and he con-  
 “ jures them to reflect coolly upon the step  
 “ which their Sovereign has been compelled  
 “ to take ; to consider the provoking cir-  
 “ cumstances which may have given cause  
 “ to it ; to respect the high dignity of his  
 “ sacred person, his liberty, and his privi-  
 “ lege, and that of all the Royal Family ;  
 “ and to assure themselves, that if the  
 “ French Nation discharge these duties, as  
 “ the King hopes, they will find in the con-  
 “ duct of his Catholic Majesty the same  
 “ sentiments of friendship and good-will  
 “ which he has constantly testified to them,  
 “ and which, in every respect better suits  
 “ his situation than any other measure  
 “ whatsoever.

“ At Aranjuez, July 1st 1791.

“ True copies, being compared with the  
 “ original.

“ Paris, July 9th 1791. Signed *Montmorin*.”



During the reading of this note the members of the *Coté-Gauche* and the Galleries several times broke out into murmurs, and the most indecent peals of laughter, which were redoubled when it was concluded. To put a stop to those impertinences, or rather to add another to them, and before the Assembly entered upon the discussion of the note from the Court of Spain, they read a letter from the clerks of a petty charitable institution, who sent them the sum of 821 *livres 5 sols* for the pay of three men for the National Guards during a year, and this act of patriotism obtained the greatest applauses. *Rabaud de St. Etienne* then spoke: “ We have,” said he, “ heard a note read, in which the King  
“ of Spain appears to manifest his desire  
“ still to live in good understanding.”—  
“ What! what!” cried out several voices from the *Coté-Gauche*: “ The order of the day!  
“ The order of the day.”—“ I do not think,” replied he, “ that when the Minister and  
“ Diplomatic Committee communicate to  
“ you a paper, which appears to indicate  
“ arrangements relative to your affairs,  
“ you ought to pass on to the order of the  
“ day. I move that you declare, that as  
“ the Assembly do not mean to meddle with  
“ the



“ the affairs of any Foreign Nation, the  
 “ French Nation will never suffer any other  
 “ Nation to meddle with theirs. This is  
 “ the spirit of the answer which *M. de*  
 “ *Montmorin* ought to be desired to re-  
 “ turn.” Enthusiastic applauses announced  
 the success of this motion. The Assembly,  
 after a very short discussion, passed to the order  
 of the day, and sent back the King of Spain’s  
 letter to the Committee that had presented  
 it.

It was but natural and consistent, that the  
 period when the Altar and the Throne were  
 overturned in France, should prove a period  
 of glory for the guilty authors whose poi-  
 soned pens had prepared and accelerated  
 those sad events. The Assembly had decreed  
 the honours of the Pantheon to *Voltaire*; and  
 his ashes were removed thither on the 11th  
 of July, in a most pompous manner. The  
 car which conveyed the body was drawn by  
 twelve horses, of a light grey colour, har-  
 nessed four abreast, and led by men in an-  
 tient dresses. Numerous detachments from  
 all the battalions of the Parisian National  
 Guard opened and closed the procession of  
 the funeral, which set out at two o’clock in  
 the afternoon, from the spot where the Bas-



tille stood, continued along the Boulevard to the *Place Louis XV.* crossed the *Pont-Royal*, stopped before *M. de Villete's*\* house, and opposite the *Comedie Françoise*, and proceeded to *Ste. Genevieve*. The immense retinue which attended this funeral was composed of Deputations from the National Assembly, from the Department, the Municipality, the Sections, Tribunals, Justices of Peace, Patriotic Societies or Clubs, Academies, Colleges, and the different Theatres of the Capital; the whole of the Jacobin Club; the Electors of 1789, the Conquerors of the Bastille, a group of the Hectors of the Market, armed with pikes, and the villains who had arrested the Royal Family at Varennes, and who marched in triumph in the midst of the pageant, crowned with branches of oak. In the train were men in antique dresses, carrying the statue of *Voltaire* on a frame. It was surrounded by pyramids crowded with medallions, on which the titles of his principal works appeared. Upon another frame was a gilt box, containing a copy of the last edition of his works published by *Beaumarchais*; round this box were the Literati. At certain

\* A nephew of Voltaire.



distances were placed different Revolutionary trophies, such as the chains, balls, and cuirasses, found in the Bastille; the colours, and plan in relief of that fort, carried by the workmen who had been employed to demolish it, and by the inhabitants of the Fauxbourg St. Antoine. Several full bands of music, both vocal and instrumental, attended the funeral, and hymns were chanted in praise of the philosophic poet. This ceremony, or rather this Revolutionary Farce, honoured with the title of a National Festival, lasted near twelve hours, to the great scandal of all who still preserved any religious ideas, or sentiments of morality and virtue. It was impossible to see without indignation, these honours, this idolatry, lavished on a man who had spent his life in ridiculing religion, and corrupting morals.

The Committees appointed to examine the papers and informations relating to the events of the 21st of June, at last, on the 12th of July, announced that they were prepared to make their report. The Assembly fixed the next day for taking it into consideration, and proceeded to call over the names of the members, as had been decreed, to ascertain the numbers of the absent. The



result was, that the number of members present amounted to 1089, and that of the absent to 132, among whom were several Deputies who were ill, or absent on leave.

On the 13th, at the opening of the Sitting, a small pamphlet profusely distributed round the Hall by truly pious hands, fixed the attention of all the Deputies, and the reading of it distinguished the most estimable from the most inveterate among them; the tears of sensibility flowed from the former, while the grimaces of malignity and fury betrayed the latter.

This work of the moment, entitled, “*The Reign of Louis XVI. presented to the View of Europe,*” contained a rapid sketch of what *Louis XVI.* had done for the Nation; the enfranchisement of Serfs; the establishment of Provincial Administrations; the suppression of the *Corvées*; the abolition of torture; milder laws against desertion; fraud and violence excluded in the enlisting of soldiers; the privilege of Citizens restored to protestants; the arts, sciences, and commerce protected; the seeds of bloody wars destroyed in the North, in the Levant, at Vienna, and in Holland; the Island of Tobago re-united to our Antilles; the fishery at Newfoundland secured



secured and augmented ; new possessions acquired in India ; the treaty with Russia ; the peace of 1782 honourable to France and its Allies ; the increase of our maritime power ; works as useful as glorious carried on in the ports of Cherbourg, Dunkirk, Havre, Toulon, La Rochelle, &c. &c. ; canals undertaken in Burgundy, Britany, Picardy, Berry, &c. &c. ; the numerous marks of sensibility engraved on every heart ; the double representation granted to the *Tiers-Etat* ; the magnanimity of *Louis XVI.*, who came with the tidings of peace to Paris, in the midst of two hundred thousand armed men in insurrection, who enjoined his guards to devote themselves, like him, to the welfare of the people, and to suffer death rather than oppose force to force ; and who came to fix his residence in the midst of a city incessantly agitated, and misled by atrocious calumnies.—

“ All Europe knows,” observed this worthy historian of *Louis XVI.* “ with  
 “ what patience and courage this good  
 “ King, since his residence in the Capital,  
 “ has borne the sufferings, the wants, and the  
 “ sacrifices which circumstances seemed to  
 “ require. After drinking during the course  
 “ of eighteen months the cup of bitterness,



“ he fell sick. As the spring advanced,  
“ his health began to mend, and on the  
“ 18th of April he wished to change the  
“ air, and go into the country. This was  
“ violently opposed; his own person, his  
“ confort, his sister, and his children, were  
“ publicly and cruelly insulted: laws were  
“ even prescribed to his conscience. With  
“ respect to the departure of the Royal  
“ Family for Montmedy,” added he, “ if  
“ that measure, which was thought to be  
“ prudent and necessary by the King, was  
“ subject to inconveniences, they can be  
“ justly imputed only to those who, con-  
“ cealing from *Louis XVI.* for near two  
“ years his true political situation, deceived  
“ him, and deceived all France, and all  
“ Europe; to those, in a word, who, after  
“ saying and repeating a thousand times,  
“ that the King was free and ought to be so,  
“ now pretend it was a fiction, and lay it  
“ down as a principle, that the King was  
“ not free, and even that he ought not to  
“ be free\*; a mode of reasoning, in fact,  
“ which tends to destroy the Constitution,

\* This was in fact the reasoning of the whole Republican Party, and of a great number of the Constitutionalists.

“ and



“ and annul all that has been done. I boldly  
 “ appeal to all Frenchmen, and ask them, if,  
 “ in return for the virtues, the civism of  
 “ the King, and his unbounded confidence  
 “ in their loyalty, they ever thought for a  
 “ single instant, that they should arrogate  
 “ to themselves the horrid sight of pillaging,  
 “ degrading, and dethroning him? I ask  
 “ the Parisians, if, because, and perhaps for  
 “ them alone, the King determined to con-  
 “ voke the States-General, they understood  
 “ that they were to have the shameful right  
 “ of abusing his love for them; that they  
 “ were to have that of tormenting, insult-  
 “ ing, and enslaving the beneficent Mo-  
 “ narch, who sacrificed his power, his pre-  
 “ rogative, his happiness, to the desire of  
 “ preserving and protecting them? Europe  
 “ waits the answers to these questions, and  
 “ the Genius of history is ready to engrave  
 “ them in indelible characters.”

This work, rendered as interesting by the  
 motives which dictated it, as by the occa-  
 sion on which it was published, was the  
 more worthy of notice and of the circum-  
 stantial extract I have made from it, as the  
 feelings which it occasioned in the Assembly  
 and the Capital prepared men's minds  
 favourably



favourably for the important discussion of which I am going to give an account.

*Muguet de Nanthou*, who was the speaker of the seven united Committees, recited in his report the particulars known respecting the departure of the Royal Family in the night from the Tuileries. The information and the different declarations received by the Committees proved, that on the 20th of June their Majesties went to bed as usual; that towards midnight the Royal Family having met together in a lower room, two unknown persons went to them; that one of these handed *Mademoiselle Brunier* and *Mademoiselle Neuville*, the Queen's Chamber-maids, into the Princes' Court, put them into a carriage that was waiting there for them, and went with them to Claye, where they joined the Royal Family, and continued with them as far as Varennes; that the other unknown person conducted *Madame de Tourzel*, the Dauphin, and *Madame Royale* to the Quay of the Theatins, where a carriage was in waiting; that after a considerable time (about half an hour) the Queen and *Madame Elizabeth* came up to them on foot, and got into the same carriage, as did the King, who arrived some moments



moments afterwards, accompanied by *M. de Maldan*, one of the three *Gardes-du-Corps* who went with the Royal Family; that at St. Martin's gate their Majesties went into a more commodious carriage, which *M. Du Moutier*, another *Garde-du-Corps*, had prepared for them, and drove without changing their coachman to Bondi, where they took post-horses, which *M. de Valori*, the third *Garde-du-Corps*, had kept in readiness; that the King had alighted from his carriage at different posts; that he spoke to people whom he met, and appeared very unconcerned till the moment of his arrest at Varennes, &c. &c.

After reporting all these facts, and an extract of all the minutes, which I have already cited, he stated and discussed the following question: *Can the King be tried?* A very strange question, and which ten years before would have been regarded in France, as well as in every other Monarchical State, as a punishable blasphemy. The reporter referred to some of the Decrees declared constitutional to solve it. "You have decreed," said he, "you have sworn to maintain a Monarchical Constitution, and the inviolability of the King, whom you have



“ have not considered as a Citizen, but as a  
“ Power. If the King were not independ-  
“ ent, if he might be judged by the Assem-  
“ bly, he would be subject to their con-  
“ trol ; he would not be free. We cannot  
“ separate the King from Royalty. If he  
“ commit a crime, we should suppose him  
“ in a deranged state of mind. His flight  
“ is not even an offence. You cannot de-  
“ termine it to be so without laws. Had  
“ he gone out of the kingdom, he would  
“ have incurred no forfeiture by the Con-  
“ stitution, till he should have refused to com-  
“ ply with a previous proclamation inviting  
“ him to return. The declaration which  
“ he left bears no legal character, and con-  
“ tains no direct or indirect renunciation of  
“ Royalty. His acceptance was a formality  
“ of mere respect, and evidently unnecessary  
“ to the validity of your Decrees. The  
“ King therefore is not guilty in the eye of  
“ the law ; and even if he were, the invio-  
“ lability of his person would not suffer his  
“ being tried. But were I permitted to re-  
“ move for a moment the veil that conceals  
“ from us the events which would be the  
“ consequence of a contrary opinion, you  
“ would see all the evils revive which af-  
“ flicted



“ afflicted England in the time of the Pre-  
 “ tender, and desolated Russia under the reign  
 “ of the infant John. You would again  
 “ see all the troubles of the minority of  
 “ *Louis XIV.*—a constant succession of  
 “ civil and foreign wars ; and amidst these  
 “ disorders, a child scarcely out of his  
 “ cradle, by turns the instrument and the  
 “ victim of parties, intrigues, and factions ;  
 “ Regents too pointed out by the Law, but in  
 “ whom there would be now no confidence.”

All the censure of the Reporter and of  
 the Committees was directed against the  
 Marquis *de Bouillé*, who had declared him-  
 self, in his letter to the Assembly, the au-  
 thor and instigator of the plan for the King's  
 departure ; who, by alarming his Majesty,  
 and instilling apprehensions into his mind,  
 had succeeded in drawing the Royal Family  
 from the Capital ; and who had prepared  
 and conducted the execution of the plan.  
 The report accordingly concluded : “ 1st,  
 “ That a prosecution should be instituted  
 “ against *M. de Bouillé* and his abettors,  
 “ accomplices, and adherents ; particu-  
 “ ly against Messrs. *Heymann, Klinglin,*  
 “ *D'Offelise, Desoteux, Goguelas, Damas,*  
 “ *Choiseuil*



“ *Choiseuil-Stainville, Audouin, Velcour,*  
“ *Mandel, Manassin, Talon, Bouillé* the  
“ son, *Fersen, Maldan, Valori,* and *Du*  
“ *Moutier,* as suspected of being acquainted  
“ with the plot, and of entertaining designs  
“ of favouring it : and that the persons who  
“ are accused, already arrested or who may  
“ be hereafter arrested, shall be sent to  
“ Orleans to be tried there. 2dly, That  
“ *Madame de Tourzel, M. de Briges,* the  
“ King’s Equerry, and four Officers of the  
“ different regiments from which the de-  
“ tachments stationed upon the road to Va-  
“ rennes had been taken, should remain in  
“ a state of arrest, in order to be dealt with  
“ according to the evidence that may ap-  
“ pear. 3dly, That the two chamber-  
“ maids should be set at liberty.”

After a silence of some moments, several Members desired that the Report should be printed ; others proposed that the discussion should be adjourned, which the Constitutional Party strongly opposed. “ We cannot be ignorant,” said *M. d’André,* “ that  
“ a class of people, who wish to seize the  
“ occasion of the King’s departure to over-  
“ turn the Constitution which they have  
“ sworn



“ sworn to maintain, only want time to stir  
 “ up some credulous persons, some unin-  
 “ formed men, who think that the over-  
 “ turning of the Constitution will redound  
 “ to their own personal advantage. These,  
 “ and I speak it without fear, are only the  
 “ factious, the intriguing, men of no  
 “ talents.”

*M. d'André* was very much applauded; but *Robespierre* was not less so in maintaining the contrary opinion. This inconsistency, of which a thousand examples may be found in assemblies of every kind with which the Revolution has covered France, proves, as I have already said, that in general the enthusiasm and the passions of the people are much less excited by a sentence than a word, although they understand neither one nor the other; but they more easily retain and repeat a word, and each individual attaches his predominating idea to it; whereas they cannot retain a sentence, or repeat it without mutilating it. Thus the popular movements which have been too often regarded in France as the effect of public opinion, had scarcely ever any connection with it. They were always excited by the factious, who took  
 this



this mode of securing success to their projects\*.

In the debates which arose in consequence of the motion for adjournment, the Constitutional Party carried it by a very great majority, and the discussion of the merits of this important subject was opened without delay. *Pethion*, who spoke first, contended violently against the opinion of the Reporter. “The inviolability of the King,” said he, “can only be applied to acts of Royalty; “in all others he ought to be subject to the “Laws, without which he would be a des- “pot.—To enjoy perfect inviolability he “should be infallible. He is, it is said, a “Power, and a Power is not subject to “punishment. What wretched sophistry! “Can he then murder with impunity? Shall

\* I had opportunities of seeing and closely observing several insurrections. I have often caused those who seemed the busiest in the mob to be separately questioned by confidential persons. They had all the same *rallying word*, but each of them attached a different idea to it: so true it is that the people, ever absorbed by their necessities, or hurried away by their passions, never can have an opinion, properly so called; for no opinion whatever can be formed but by reflection, and they are not in the habit of reflecting, neither have they time for it.



“ a *Nero*, or a *Caligula*, indulge their phren-  
 “ fies, their sanguinary taste, and we respect  
 “ them !——” A general shudder of in-  
 dignation and horror informed this villain  
 that it was not of *Nero* but of *Louis XVI.*  
 that he was speaking ; but he continued  
 nearly in the same style, in spite of frequent  
 murmurs. He concluded by moving, that  
 the King should be arraigned and tried by  
 the National Assembly, or by a Convention  
 appointed expressly for that purpose.

This motion, with which the Sitting con-  
 cluded, obtained some applauses from the  
 Members of the *Coté-Gauche*, but too few  
 to alarm the *Coté-Droit* ; who, true to the  
 resolution they had taken, kept a profound  
 silence. This debate was continued in the  
 two following Sitzings. I shall not under-  
 take to detail it : it is easy to imagine what  
 the Constitutional speakers, the *Liancourts*,  
*Lameths*, *Barnaves*, *Duports*, &c. &c. could  
 say in defence of *Louis XVI.* and the atro-  
 cious declamations of his detractors ; the  
 blasphemies of *Robespierre* and his fellows  
 are too horrible to be recalled to mind.

The Republican party, enraged at finding  
 themselves in a minority in the Assembly,  
 were extremely active in stirring up the



People against the majority. The most violent placards and pamphlets deluged the Capital; the revolutionary clubs entered into the most seditious resolutions; that of the Jacobins voted an address of censure and abuse to the National Assembly, because they had sent Commissioners to meet the King, instead of ordering him to the bar. They ordered that this address should be printed, and sent into the provinces. One of the most flaming members of the club, *Brissot*, read a discourse which he had composed on the occasion, and which he concluded with proposing to consider absolute inviolability as derogatory to the sovereignty of the Nation and subversive of the Constitution; and consequently to declare that the King might and ought to be tried: this composition was also ordered to be printed. This proposition, proclaimed by the Republican Journalists, was repeated in the vociferations of the popular groups, which assembled in greater numbers than ever. On the 14th of July, at the end of the Sitting, a very numerous deputation of the rabble, composed principally of women and workmen, calling themselves Members of the Fraternal Society, desired to be admitted to the



the bar, to present a petition relative to the existing debate. The President (*Charles de Lameth*) did not think that this Deputation ought to be admitted; but he received the petition, and undertook to propose the reading of it to the Assembly. The proposal was at first rejected by acclamation, but *Barnave* prevailed upon the Assembly merely to defer the reading of the Petition to the opening of the Sitting on the next day. “The question before us,” said he, “gains the more, the more it is agitated. It is of importance that the public should be informed, that no doubts should be left respecting the wisdom of the decree you are going to pass, that all should be heard, all be discussed, and no objection remain unanswered.”

The following Sitting was opened with the reading of the Petition of the Deputies of the Fraternal Society. We may judge, by the audacity of this production, to what a pitch at that moment the fermentation and delirium of the Parisian populace had arrived.

“*Representatives of the Nation,*

“The French sent you to give them a

R 2

“Consti-



“ Constitution, and not to establish upon the  
“ Throne a perjured, traitor Chief, who has  
“ broken the most solemn oaths ; a Chief  
“ who has manifested the most perfidious  
“ and most destructive designs against the  
“ *great work* in which all have concurred.  
“ Justly alarmed at the dangerous disposi-  
“ tions of your Committees, we come to  
“ unbosom our anxieties to you, and to de-  
“ mand of you, in the name of the Country,  
“ in the name of that Liberty which it has  
“ recovered, to take speedy measures to dis-  
“ sipate them. When the Romans, the  
“ first free Nation, saw their country in  
“ danger, and that the question was to agree  
“ upon the interests of all, they assembled  
“ as a Nation. The Senators mixed with  
“ them to collect their votes, and the Senate  
“ never decided alone upon such important  
“ subjects. It is with this spirit of the  
“ Romans, with this spirit of Liberty,  
“ which we will preserve as long as we  
“ live, that we come to entreat you not to  
“ pass a definitive act upon the fate of *Louis*  
“ *XVI.* before the wishes of all the Com-  
“ munes of France are manifested ; before the  
“ voice of the mass of the people is heard  
“ upon a subject in which the interests of  
“ the



“ the whole Nation are concerned, and to  
“ which the power you received from  
“ them does not extend. Beware that you  
“ do not yourselves crown the atrocious per-  
“ fidies of our enemies. Finally, consider  
“ that you neither can nor ought to pre-  
“ judge a question of this nature; every  
“ decree not contained within the bounds  
“ prescribed to you, would be null, and  
“ bear at the same time a character the most  
“ invasive of the People’s rights.”

This petition was in a great measure the text upon which the Republican orators had commented in their declamations. It excited as much murmuring in the Assembly as applause in the Galleries; but on the reading of the signatures, among which were the names of a great number of women, repeated bursts of laughter increased this tumult, to which the Assembly put an end by passing to the order of the day.

The Constitutional Party, assured of victory, were not willing to push it so far as they might have done. The re-establishment of the Royal functions and the executive power in the hands of the King, should have been the natural consequence of



the decree proposed by the Committees. How in fact could it be determined that the King ought not to be arraigned for his departure, without allowing that no penalty whatever could be pronounced against him? What then could justify the outrage of prolonging the state of nullity, or rather the state of captivity, in which *M. de la Fayette* detained his Majesty and the Royal Family? The Republican Party felt so strongly the force of these arguments, that they insisted on the King's being brought to trial, only from the thorough conviction that, if he were not, it would be impossible to prevent his being restored to the same state in which he was before his departure.

“ If you decide that there are no grounds  
“ for impeaching the King,” said *Prieur*,  
one of the most violent Demagogues—“ if  
“ you say that he ought not to be tried, you  
“ ought to replace him in the state in which  
“ he was before his flight: for, by acknow-  
“ ledging that there is no offence, you de-  
“ clare that he is in the same situation as if  
“ he had not done what you say is no of-  
“ fence. If that be not your intention, we  
“ are much further advanced; for we agree  
“ with the Committees.” A Member of  
the



the Committee of the Constitution (*Desmeuniers*) immediately replied: That the Committee were unanimously of opinion, that the suspension of the functions of the Executive Power ought not be taken off till the Constitutional Act was finished; that the Constituent Body had a right to suspend the Royal functions; that when the Constitutional Charter was completed, it ought to be presented to the King; and that, if he did not accept it without any reserve or condition, he should then forfeit the Throne.

These strange assertions were unanimously applauded by the Members of the *Coté-Gauche*, but shocked those of the *Coté-Droit*. *M. de Monlosier* several times exclaimed, *It is not true*. How indeed was it possible with any coolness to hear those Deputies of Bailiwicks, sent to the States-General without any other power relative to the Constitution than that of concerting with the King the improvements it might need, by their own authority declare and proclaim themselves the Constituent Power; and by that title arrogate a right of annihilating the ancient Constitution, of drawing up a new one without the King's participation, of compelling him to accept, without



any reserve or condition, this pretended Constitutional Charter, under pain of forfeiting the Throne, and of depriving him provisionally of all the rights of Royalty? The Members of this Assembly had not since their meeting received more extensive powers than those they brought with them; their *lawful* power then, in the month of July 1791, was incontestably as limited as it was at the opening of the States-General. Now it is certain, that if in the month of May 1789, any Member whatever of the Assembly had dared to hazard only one of the opinions which *Desmeuniers* had advanced as so many Constitutional principles, he would have run the greatest risk as he went from the Assembly of being insulted, abused, and perhaps severely chastised by the People; and that the most moderate amongst his colleagues would have regarded him as a madman who ought to be sent to Charenton, and kept there till he was cured. But two years of crimes and outrages committed with impunity against the Royal authority had so misguided the minds of men, and had increased the powers usurped by the Assembly to so monstrous a degree that there were no longer



longer any limits to them, but what they chose to fix.

The explanation given by *Desmeuniers*, in the name of the Committee of the Constitution\*, was not the only concession which the leaders of the Constitutional Party had the baseness to make, in the dread of endangering the popularity which the King's flight had restored to them. They thought it necessary still further to soothe the Republican Party, in order to weaken their opposition to the decree proposed by the Committees. Before it was put to the vote, they adopted with great applause, as Constitutional Articles, some arrangements that augmented the number of cases in which the Crown might be forfeited. They were decreed in these terms :

\* It was formed into a Decree, which the Assembly passed in the following Sitting. The terms of it were :  
 “ The National Assembly decree, that their Decree of  
 “ the 25th of last month, which suspends the exercise of  
 “ the Royal functions and the functions of the Execu-  
 “ tive Power in the King's hands, shall continue in  
 “ force until the Constitution shall be completed,  
 “ and the whole Constitutional Act presented to the  
 “ King.”



Art. I. If the King, after having sworn to the Constitution, should afterwards retract, he shall be held to have abdicated.

Art. II. If the King put himself at the head of an army to direct the forces against the Nation, or if he order his Generals to execute such a project, or if he do not by a formal act oppose every attempt of this nature which might be executed in his name, he shall be held to have abdicated.

Art. III. A King who shall have abdicated, or who shall be held to have abdicated, shall become a simple citizen, and be subject to impeachment according to the ordinary forms, for all offences committed after his abdication\*.

The second Article of the Decree was conceived in such vague terms, and susceptible of so many different interpretations, the nature of this formal act, and so rigorously required, was so indeterminate, that *Robespierre* himself, with a view of securing the

\* These three Articles, which were decreed without being committed to writing in the Sitting of the 15th of July, were thus drawn up by the Committee of the Constitution, and adopted by the Assembly in the Sitting of the 16th.



means of dethroning the King upon the first hostilities against France, could not have worded the article otherwise.

As soon as these three articles were decreed, the Constitutional Party took advantage of the enthusiasm of the moment which they had excited, to put to the vote the plan for a Decree relative to the events of the 21st of June, and all the articles were adopted almost unanimously just as they were proposed by the Reporter. The Republicans and the Royalists were equally astonished to see that so feeble and insignificant a decree in respect to the King, was the whole result of all the efforts and manœuvres of the Constitutionalists. After having clearly and ably demonstrated the inviolability of the King and the impossibility of trying him, how could they be so pusillanimous as not to call for its actual insertion in the Articles by the Assembly, among whom they had acquired a very great majority? Could it have escaped them, that after so solemn a discussion the silence of the Decree upon this important subject rendered it still more doubtful than before? “The Assembly heard us all,” the Republicans might say to them; “our maxims as well as yours resounded in the Tribune, and they  
“ have



“ have not exempted the King from a trial :  
“ they have decreed nothing concerning  
“ him. We may therefore maintain, with-  
“ out contradicting any Decree, that there  
“ are grounds for accusing him ; that the  
“ Assembly themselves have presumed it,  
“ and have pronounced him guilty, by not  
“ re-instating him in the exercise of the  
“ Royal Functions, and of the Executive  
“ Power.”

Such, in fact, from that very evening, were the reasonings of all the Revolutionary Journalists, and the comments of all the Republican Clubs upon the Decree which had been passed. That of the Jacobins, whose President was a member of the Assembly, applauded and adopted the motion of no longer acknowledging the King. Pamphlets profusely distributed and given away *gratis*, informed the Public that the Assembly, by not trying the King, had acted contrary to the wishes of the seventy-three Departments, which required the abdication of the King, and a Republic. These declamations, which hired orators repeated to the populace assembled in the public walks, in all the squares, and at all the corners of the streets, excited the most violent fermentation



tion in the Capital. Many Deputies, on being known to have supported the Decree proposed by the Committees, were grossly insulted in the streets. The people went in crowds to the different places of public amusement, and, after driving out the spectators, caused them to be shut. These excesses were denounced the next day to the Assembly. Many speakers very justly blamed the Municipality for not having taken measures to re-establish order, and secure the execution of the Decrees relative to the police, and for having released a man who had been taken distributing money among the rabble. Complaints, equally well-founded, were also made against the Jacobin Club, but the Assembly paid no attention to these remonstrances. The Constitutionalists, ascribing the effects of the weakness and inconsistency of the Decree they had obtained to the vigour which they supposed it possessed, were afraid to enter on a fresh contest with the Jacobins, and were satisfied with obtaining a Decree for an Address to the French Nation, to explain to them the principles upon which the Decree had been passed, and for sending for the Ministers, the Department, the Municipality,



lity, and the Public Accusers of Paris, in order that an injunction might be given to them to attend, according to their respective duties, to the maintenance of order and tranquillity; to the execution of the Decrees, and to cause information to be instantly lodged against all who broke the laws, and disturbed the public peace. On the same day, in the Evening Sitting, it was determined, that, instead of the Address which had been decreed, the report of the seven Committees, and the opinions which they had maintained, should be printed, and sent into all the Departments.

So great an expence for printing was certainly not necessary to justify the Assembly for not proceeding against the King. They might have contented themselves with publishing the three following sentences:

“ We cannot bring the King to trial, not  
“ only because the Constitution has declared  
“ him inviolable, but because, laying his  
“ inviolability aside, we have seen nothing  
“ to accuse him of.

“ His plan of a journey to Montmedy  
“ was no crime”; and if he had even gone  
“ out of the Kingdom, he would not have  
“ incurred



“ incurred the loss of his Crown, according  
 “ to the Constitution, until he should have  
 “ refused to comply with the proclamation  
 “ by which the Assembly should have in-  
 “ vited him to return.

“ It is true that another article of the  
 “ same Decree, which we have declared to  
 “ be Constitutional, states that the King  
 “ shall not go farther than twenty leagues  
 “ from the place where the National Assem-  
 “ bly shall be held ; but no penalty could  
 “ be incurred by the breach of this law,  
 “ for the article mentions none, and it was  
 “ besides no law in respect to *Louis XVI.*  
 “ not having been presented for his accept-  
 “ ance, and therefore could not be brought  
 “ against him.”

The deplorable issue of the journey to Montmedy caused the other schemes to miscarry, the execution of which would have been much less hazardous\*; and had either of them succeeded, which was at least very probable, the salvation of the Monarchy and of the Royal Family would have been insured.

This journey being undoubtedly, of all

\* *M. Montmorin's* plan, and that which the Emperor had adopted at Mantua, on the 20th of May.



the steps taken by the King, that which was most injurious to him, they who are conscious of having prevailed upon him by their counsels and entreaties to attempt it, cannot but be exceedingly unhappy, whatever may have been their motives ; for it is not necessary that the error of such fatal advice should be a crime to be the subject of lasting grief and repentance.



## CHAPTER XLIV.

*Seditious Commotions—Riot in the Champ-de-Mars—M. de la Fayette and three Municipal Officers insulted—Proclamation of Martial Law—The Municipal Corps with the Red Flag, and M. de la Fayette at the head of the National Guard assailed with Stones—Measures adopted to prevent Insurrections—Reading of the Constitutional Act—Motions of M. de la Fayette, M. Malouet, and M. Desprémenil—Declaration of the Members of the Côté-Droit—Rewards granted to the Villains who had assisted in the King's arrest—The Clubs denounced by the Ministers—Debate upon the Title and Rights of the Members of the Royal Family—*



*Speech made by the Duke of Orleans—Motion of M. Malouet relative to the Constitution — Debate upon National Conventions—Decree regulating the form of presenting the Constitutional Act to the King — Robespierre's Opinion — A Plan which had been concerted between the Constitutional Party and M. Malouet to reform the Constitution—The Plan miscarries — Closing of the Constitutional Act—The Assembly decree that nothing contained in it shall be changed—It is presented to the King—A shew of liberty restored to his Majesty—The Palace and Garden of the Tuileries are opened to the Public.*

THE timidity of the measures which the Assembly had pursued in repressing the fermentation and disorder which the Factionous excited and kept up in the Capital, augmented their audacity and their hopes so far as to determine them to stir up new outrages, in order to obtain, by means of the terror which they inspired, the revocation of the Decree relative to the events of the 21st of June. The Clubs, those eternal sources of fanaticism and anarchy, strove which should  
1 adopt



adopt the greatest number of resolutions, and issue the greatest number of seditious advertisements. The members of the *Cordelier's* Club published a declaration, that they had among them a society of Tyrannicides, who had individually sworn to put to death whoever should make an attempt against French Liberty. The Municipality informed that a considerable meeting was to take place upon the site of the Bastille, on the morning of the 17th of July, and that numerous mobs were to assemble in the different public places, and afterwards unite in the *Champ-de-Mars*, immediately issued a proclamation, forbidding all persons from assembling in groups in any public place. The Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard, and all the Commissioners of the police were at the same time ordered to employ all the means which the law gave them to disperse the mobs, and to maintain peace. But these precautions did not prevent the mobs from forming, and going in crowds to the *Champ-de-Mars*, to sign there a petition against the Decree of the 15th of July. Two persons whom they had dragged thither, and who probably refused to sign the petition, were immediately murdered, and torn to pieces.



The Municipality being informed of this at eleven o'clock in the morning, sent three of their members, accompanied by numerous detachments of the National Guard to re-establish order; and, if necessary, to proclaim Martial Law. The Deputation were complimented with a shower of stones, by which some of the National Guard were wounded. *M. de la Fayette* was in very great danger. A pistol was fired at him, but missed him. The villain who had committed the crime was seized and carried to the Section. *M. de la Fayette*, yielding without reflection to a motion of generosity as misplaced as inconsistent, set him at liberty, while he ordered four other men, arrested in the crowd for throwing stones, to be closely confined. The three Commissioners of the Municipality finding that their representations only enraged the seditious, and that their numbers augmented every instant, returned to the *Hotel-de-Ville*, and gave an account of the facts. Their report determined the Municipal Body to proclaim Martial Law, and to go themselves to the *Champ-de-Mars*. They began their march preceded by a detachment of cavalry, three pieces of cannon, and the red flag, and followed



by a numerous detachment of the National Guards.

It was half past seven o'clock in the evening, when the Municipal Body thus escorted, arrived in the *Champ-de-Mars*; scarcely were they entered, when the cries of *Down with the red flag! Down with the bayonets!* resounded from all sides. The cries were soon followed by a shower of stones, and a gun was even fired at the Municipal Officers. A first discharge of muskets made in the air, then dispersed a great number of the seditious; but when they saw that no one was wounded, they renewed their insults and their cries, and began again to fling stones. The National Guard then fired upon them in earnest, and killed and wounded a sufficient number to frighten and put the remainder to the rout\*: some of them were arrested and sent to prison. This expedition being thus terminated, the Municipal Body arrived at the *Hotel-de-Ville* at ten o'clock at night, and caused the red flag to be hung out of one of the principal windows, where it remained

\* The number of killed and wounded were at least forty, although the Mayor stated them only at twenty-three or twenty-four in the report he made to the Assembly.



till the 7th of August. At midnight tranquillity was re-established in the Capital.

The Municipal Body came to the Assembly on the following day, to give them an account of all these events, or rather to confirm the details which they already knew.—The Constitutionals, proud of the victory *M. de la Fayette* had gained, and emboldened by the general indignation which this day had excited against the Republicans, bestowed, through *Charles de Lameth*, who presided in this Sitting, the most pompous eulogiums on the conduct of the Municipality, and on the wisdom of all their measures ; but, above all, on the bravery of the National Guard, *of those soldiers of Liberty and of the Constitution*, who had, in this instance, given such striking proofs of their submission to the law, and had continued to justify the high esteem and gratitude of the Nation, by their zeal, their courage, and their fidelity. It was decreed, by acclamation, that this answer to the speech of *M. Bailly*, should be immediately printed, and stuck up in all the streets. Tender reproaches mixed with testimonies of admiration, were addressed to *M. de la Fayette*, for his act of generosity, and the Assembly charged the tribunals



tribunals to arrest and prosecute the monster who had dared to attempt the life of the hero of the day. They at the same time decreed, that the Committee of Reports and that of Inquiry, should for the future form but one Committee, in order to draw to one focus all the lights and all the information which might lead to the discovery of criminals. The Committees of the Constitution and of Jurisprudence, then proposed a Decree against all those who either by placards, advertisements, or pamphlets, or by speeches at meetings, or in public places, should excite insurrection, murder, pillage, or any other disobedience to the law. Severe penalties were enacted in all cases, against the authors of these instigations, and if the crime should be committed, they were to be prosecuted as being really accomplices.

*Petion* was the only member of the Republican Party who dared to make any objection against this Decree, which he regarded as fatal to the liberty of the press.—*Yes, yes*, cried the supporters of the Decree, *fatal to Marat, Brissot, Laclos, and Danton*. He was interrupted at every sentence by murmurs, hisses, and bursts of laughter, to which the patriots in the Galleries opposed



posed a few weak applauses. After a very short debate the Assembly unanimously adopted the proposed Decree.

Some villains of different countries having been arrested in the insurrection of the *Champ-de-Mars*, the Republican Party endeavoured to turn upon the Foreign Powers the violent animadversion of which they were themselves the object, and gave out that it was through their Emissaries that these seditious commotions had been excited. A Jew named *Ephraim*, a private agent of the King of Prussia, and seven or eight other Foreigners, were denounced to the Committee of Inquiry, who ordered them to be arrested, on the night between the 18th and 19th of July; but neither their papers, nor the evidence taken respecting them furnished the least proof in support of the denunciation hazarded against them, and all the odium of the catastrophe of the 17th of July was finally cast upon the Jacobin Club, in which a division took place: a great number of its members, who were also members of the National Assembly, left this Society of pretended friends to the Constitution, and joined the Club of the Feuillans, which was entirely composed of Constitutionalists. The tribunal of police  
caused



caused the presses of the most incendiary Republican Journalists to be seized\*; but the order given to arrest the Editors could not be put in execution, as they had taken flight, with *Danton*, *Le Gendre*, and *Camille Desmoulins*.

The Constitutionals were more powerful than they had ever been. Being sure of the majority in the Assembly, in the Committees, and more particularly in that charged with the revision of the Constitution, it entirely depended on them to make all the changes necessary to render it truly Monarchical, and to restore peace and happiness to France. They might have re-established its ancient Government without its abuses, and improved it by the reforms pointed out in the majority of the instructions given to the Deputies by their constituents. The grateful Nation would have forgotten all their faults, or only considered them as venial errors, amply repaid by so great a benefit.—This is the manner in which they should have terminated their career, and in which they might really have terminated it, if they had been willing,

\* *Marat*, who published *l'Ami du Peuple*, and *Freron*, who was the editor of *l'Orateur du Peuple*.



if these beardless legislators had not foolishly presumed, that they were all so many *Solons*, and if they had not had the weak ambition of retaining to the last minute that despicable popularity of the streets, reduced to the praises of a vile rabble, who in the *Champ-de-Mars* had received the treatment they merited.

(*August 1791.*) Such unhappily was the disposition of the party that governed the Assembly, at the period in which the Committee of Revision presented their digest of the Constitutional Act, or rather the classification they had made of the different Decrees of which it was to be composed. This work being printed, was distributed among all the Deputies at the opening of the Sitting of the 5th of August, and occasioned a motion to be made for authorising the Electoral Assemblies to resume their operations, which the Decree of the 24th of June had suspended. Upon an observation being made that it would be imprudent to take off the suspension before it was known whether the King would or would not accept the Constitution, the author of the motion (*M. d'André*,) maintained that the Constitution was absolutely independant of the King's acceptance.



tance. "It is," said he with more boldness  
 than truth, "an Act by which the Repre-  
 sentatives of the Nation express its wish.  
 The will of one or several individuals  
 cannot alter it. When we have once de-  
 creed it, neither we nor our successors can  
 change it. It can be affected only by a  
 majority of the Nation." These demo-  
 cratic assertions were unanimously applauded  
 by the *Coté-Gauche*, and the Assembly de-  
 creed, that from the 25th of August to the  
 5th of September, the Electoral Assemblies  
 should be convoked throughout all the De-  
 partments of the Kingdom, to name Depu-  
 ties to the Legislative Body, and that the  
 Deputies who should be appointed should  
 immediately repair to Paris, and enter upon  
 their office on the day to be fixed by a  
 Decree of the National Assembly. They  
 then proceeded to read the Constitutional  
 Act. When it was concluded, *M. de la*  
*Fayette* rose to make an eulogium upon this  
 pretended master-piece, "Which being  
 formed," said he, "according to the know-  
 ledge of this enlightened age, requires no  
 further delay, and which all things call  
 upon us to settle. It is at a time when  
 so many conspiring passions are at work  
 around



“ around us, that it behoves us to proclaim  
“ these principles of Liberty and Equality,  
“ to the maintenance of which every  
“ Frenchman has irrevocably pledged his  
“ life and his honour. The Assembly also  
“ doubtless think that it is time to give the  
“ constituted authorities motion and union ;  
“ that the suspension of the Royal Func-  
“ tions should cease, and mutual confi-  
“ dence revive. I will not mention the  
“ painful duties which my Country had a  
“ right to expect from me on this occasion,  
“ for every kind of sacrifice is due to it,  
“ but I may at least be permitted to look  
“ forward with eagerness to the time when  
“ they will cease to be incumbent upon me.  
“ I move that the Committee of the Consti-  
“ tution be charged to prepare the plan of  
“ a Decree concerning the form in which  
“ the Constitutional Act, as soon as it is  
“ finally passed, shall be presented in the  
“ name of the French People to the King,  
“ to be by him examined in the most inde-  
“ pendent manner, and for his acceptance,  
“ most free and unrestrained.”

I have already proved that the insults  
with which *M. de la Fayette* had so inhu-  
manly filled the cup of bitterness to the  
Royal



Royal Family, and which he endeavoured to palliate, by qualifying them with the terms of *painful duties*, were neither prescribed nor authorised by any Decree, and was even literally contrary to that by which the Assembly had ordained the maintenance of the attentions and respect due to the Royal dignity ; and no body was the dupe of this hypocritical and false modification. The worthy part of the Nation gave the appellation of *great crimes* to what *M. de la Fayette* was pleased to call *painful duties*, and posterity will not mistake them. The conqueror of the *Champ-de-Mars* however had no reason to expect to be so severely treated by the Assembly. They adopted his motion, and adjourned the discussion of the Constitutional Act till the Sitting of the 8th of August.

The reporter (*Thouret*) opened this important discussion by stating the plan followed by the Committee in their labours, and the considerations which had served them as a general rule to distinguish the Decrees truly Constitutional from those which were otherwise. “ It might have happened,” said he, “ that in confining ourselves to the  
 “ strict and rigorous sense of the word *Con-*  
*stitution,*



“ *stitution*, we should have only made a  
“ collection of resolutions relative to the  
“ division and organization of the public  
“ powers; but we were sensible that the  
“ Assembly had not established the Consti-  
“ tution for a new people, nor in a new  
“ country; and that the civic chapter of  
“ abolitions which should have preceded the  
“ ingrafting of Liberty and Equality ought  
“ to be Constitutionally consecrated.” He  
then successively ran through the different  
titles of the Constitutional Act, and endea-  
voured to prove that they were classed in the  
clearest and most methodical order.

*M. Malouet*, who first spoke after the re-  
porter, did not stop at discussing the merit  
of the plan, but he attacked its result with  
such force of argument, that the members  
of the Committee finding themselves unable  
to answer it, found it much easier to inter-  
rupt the speaker, and to direct the debate to  
the discussion of the plan. “ Every gene-  
“ ral criticism on the Constitution should  
“ be forbidden,” said *Chapelier*, “ no one  
“ should suffer the thought of changing it  
“ to enter his mind, and every discussion  
“ that has that tendency should be avoided.”  
*M. Malouet* in vain insisted on being per-  
mitted



mitted to continue. He was incessantly interrupted by murmuring and clamour. "If the Assembly will not hear me," said he, "I will henceforth range myself with that class which obey in silence; but I declare, that I cannot as a Representative of the People, give my suffrage to the Constitutional Charter proposed to us\*. I shall merely move that the deliberation be concluded by a call of votes, and that the Assembly accelerate the measures which are to secure the most perfect liberty to the King." He again urged the Assembly to suffer him to deliver his opinion; but all the answer he obtained was fresh murmurs, and he was forbidden to speak by a decree†.

*M. Despremenil*, warned by this example of the necessity of preparing the Assembly favourably, that he might be suffered to go

\* *M. Malouet* repeated and published this declaration on the 15th of September, after the Constitutional Act had been accepted by the King.

† On the following day *M. Malouet* printed the speech which he was not permitted to deliver in the Hall. It is reported in the collection of his opinions, vol. iii. page 47.

through



through the important declaration he wished to make, announced when he rose to speak, that it was his intention religiously to submit to the order of discussion established in the Assembly. “It appears to me (said he) that it is the intention of the Committee, supported by several of the Members who have spoken, to treat only upon the two following questions:—*Is the method adopted by the Committee a good one? Are the Decrees which they have collected in their plan of the Constitution really Constitutional?*”—“Yes, yes,” he was answered, and with great clapping. “These intentions being thoroughly understood (continued he), I shall not deviate from them; I only fear that the applauses I have just heard will be retracted. As I am not disposed to take advantage of the order of the discussion, I declare that we should think ourselves unworthy of the esteem of honest men, if we did not boldly declare to you beforehand, that we persist in all the declarations and protestations which we have made on the subject of the enterprises directed for two years past against Religion, the Royal authority, the Constitutional Principle of the French Monarchy, and against all property.”

The



The Members of the *Coté-Droit* rose, and said all at once: *I declare it.* In consequence they forbore taking any part in the discussion of the Constitutional Act, which occupied almost every Sitting of the Assembly till the 3d of September. During this long interval they never forsook the character of passive spectators which they had imposed upon themselves, but to demonstrate their indignation, when they heard the Committee of Reports propose to the Assembly, to decree honorary and pecuniary rewards to all the villains who had assisted in arresting the King. The proposed decree fixed the sum total to be divided amongst them at 200,000 livres; of which 30,000 were given to *Drouet*, and 20,000 to the Solicitor of the Commune of Varennes. The conduct of the Departments, the Municipalities, and National Guards, who had been the most active in preventing the King's escape, was declared honourable. The city of Varennes was rewarded with the gift of two pieces of cannon, besides a musket and a sabre for each of its National Guards, and a tri-coloured pair of colours with this inscription—*The grateful Country to the Town of Varennes.* The towns of Clermont en Ar-



gonne and of St. Menehould obtained each one piece of cannon and seven hundred muskets for the National Guards of their Districts.

One of the Members of the *Coté-Gauche*\* observed after the reading of the Decree, that if any blame could be laid upon the Committee, it was that of too much parsimony in their limits of the National munificence. “ If when the King went off you had been  
“ told that for 200,000 livres he should be  
“ arrested, I ask who is he among us who  
“ would have dared to oppose——?” Several Members of the *Coté-Droit* sprang up and answered together, *I, I, All of us.* The President (*Victor de Broglie*) put the Decree to the vote in a great hurry, and declared that it was adopted by the majority; although the *Coté-Droit*, and some of the Members of the *Coté-Gauche*, had not risen when the question was put. *There is some doubt as to there being a majority; we demand that the question be put again;* cried several voices, in the midst of hisses, and shouts *for the order of the day.* Insulting exclamations were addressed to the President: he was

\* *Muguet de Nanthou.*

told,



told, it was unworthy the son of a Marshal of France to carry a Decree in so scandalous a manner. *Victor de Broglie* only answered these reproaches with the noise of his bell, which he never ceased ringing while the shouts and vociferations of the galleries drowned the remonstrances of the Members of the *Cotè-Droit*. After a long tumult, the predominating cry in this uproar being the order of the day, it was finally adopted.

At this time the Keeper of the Seals went to the Assembly, and interrupted the debate upon the Constitutional Act with a very serious denunciation against several societies of Friends of the Constitution. Those of *Alby* had carried off by *main force* from the Registry, proceedings that were instituted against assassins, and burnt them. Those of *Caën* had insulted and menaced the Court, carried off and burnt the proceedings begun against the brigands who had broken the statue of *Louis XIV.* and the Public Accuser had with difficulty escaped their vengeance. Those of *Marseilles* had compelled the Municipal Officers to resign, summoned the Municipality, despised the authority of the Departments, insulted the Magistrates, &c. &c.: those of *Orleans*, under pretence



of inspecting the conduct of the High National Court, had taken a place in the Sit-tings, &c. &c. &c.

The Minister of the Interior also denounced several enterprizes and acts of violence of the same nature, of which complaints had been made to him; and the Committee of Reports denounced the Abbé *Fauchet*, Bishop of *Calvados*, who, as well as his grand Vicar, went preaching through the town and country, in churches, clubs, and even in the streets, anarchy, rebellion, the Agrarian law, and a contempt for the Constituted Authorities. Upon these different denunciations the Assembly decreed, that the Minister of Justice should without delay give directions that the Abbé *Fauchet* and his Grand Vicar should be prosecuted by the tribunal of Bayeux, and daily inform the Assembly of the state of the proceedings.

While the Assembly, in order to establish their power, stood in need of the outrages of every kind which were committed or excited throughout the Kingdom by the Jacobin Clubs, they considered them but as so many acts of exalted patriotism, and no severe law was ever passed to punish or suppress them effectually:



fectually : but the Constitutional Faction now triumphant, had no farther interest in continuing those excesses, and had reason to fear that these formidable means which they had made use of to annihilate the ancient French Constitution, might be employed with equal success by the Republicans against the new one. It was of importance to avert the danger, which was the motive of the denunciation made to the Assembly by *M. Duport de Tertre* and *M. de Lessart*, both of them intimately connected with the leaders of the Constitutional Party. It was necessary to prepare the public mind to receive the Articles of the Constitutional Act which limited the power of the Clubs, to which the King in his declaration had, with so much reason imputed the disorder, crimes, and anarchy that afflicted France.

The disgrace of the Republican Party, and the silence of the Royalists in the discussion of the Constitutional Act, suffered it to advance coldly towards its conclusion ; till the question relative to the political rights which the Royal Family ought to enjoy, furnished the Duke of *Orleans* with a new opportunity, which he did not lose of manifesting all the meanness of his mind.



According to the opinion of the Committee, the exclusion of the Members of the Royal Family from political rights was grounded on the necessity of preserving the purity of the Representative Government, and the distinction of the powers. “ This  
“ family,” said the Reporter, “ being the  
“ only one privileged, they possess politi-  
“ cal rights different from the rest of the  
“ citizens. The Executive Power is their  
“ patrimony : the exclusion of the rights of  
“ the active citizen can be no degradation to  
“ them, as it is the result of a peculiar and  
“ hereditary privilege. Nevertheless it is  
“ just to render this exclusion honourable  
“ by the participation of a particular prero-  
“ gative ; and this method appears to us the  
“ best to consolidate on a firm footing the  
“ abolition of the privileges between all  
“ other citizens. If the Royal Family en-  
“ joy a prerogative grounded upon princi-  
“ ples applicable to themselves alone, it is  
“ your interest to destroy every distinction  
“ which does not rest upon the same foun-  
“ dation. We are shackled in this respect  
“ by the decree that was passed concerning  
“ the title of *Prince*, which it was pro-  
“ posed to you to grant to the Members of  
“ the



“ the Dynasty. As perhaps you not think  
 “ yourselves absolutely bound by that De-  
 “ cree, we propose to you the following ar-  
 “ ticle :

“ *The Members of the King's Family*  
 “ *being the only persons admitted to an*  
 “ *hereditary dignity, they form a distin-*  
 “ *guished class of Citizens ; they may not*  
 “ *exercise any of the rights of an active*  
 “ *citizen, and they have no other political*  
 “ *right than that of the contingent suc-*  
 “ *cession to the Throne. They shall bear*  
 “ *the title of—.*” The word *Prince* was  
 understood, but a blank was left through  
 respect to the decree which had rejected  
 that title.

The Duke of *Orleans* being previously  
 informed of the opinion of the Committee  
 upon this question, had prepared to speak  
 against it. He rose immediately after the read-  
 ing of the article proposed by the Commit-  
 tee, and with unusual confidence delivered  
 the following Speech :

“ As to the second part of the article pro-  
 “ posed to you, I shall only say, that you



“ positively rejected it a few days ago.  
“ With respect to the quality of active citi-  
“ zen, I ask, if it be for the advantage of  
“ the King’s relations that it is proposed to  
“ you to deprive them of it? If it be for  
“ their advantage, an article of your Consti-  
“ tution formally opposes it; and this is the  
“ article:—*No part of the Nation, nor any*  
“ *individual, can have any privilege, or be*  
“ *exempted from the common right of all*  
“ *Frenchmen.* If it be not for the advan-  
“ tage of the King’s relations that it is pro-  
“ posed to you to erase them out of the list  
“ of active citizens, I maintain that you have  
“ no right to order them to be erased. You  
“ have declared all born in France, and whose  
“ fathers were Frenchmen, to be French Citi-  
“ zens. Now the persons in question in the  
“ plan of your Committees are born in  
“ France, and of French parents. It was your  
“ intention, by means of conditions easily to  
“ be performed, that every man in the world  
“ might have it in his power to become a  
“ French Citizen; now I ask if the King’s  
“ relations are not men? You have said, that  
“ the quality of French Citizen cannot be  
“ lost but by a voluntary renunciation, or by  
“ condemnations which suppose a crime.  
“ If



“ If then it is no crime in me to be born a  
 “ relation to the Monarch, I cannot lose the  
 “ quality of a French Citizen, but by a free  
 “ act of my will. And do not tell me, that  
 “ I am a French Citizen, but that I cannot  
 “ be an active Citizen; for before we em-  
 “ ploy this miserable subterfuge, it must be  
 “ explained how a man can be a Citizen in  
 “ any case or condition, who cannot exer-  
 “ cise the rights of one. It should also be  
 “ explained, by what whim the most dis-  
 “ tant relation (*suppléant*) of the Monarch  
 “ cannot become a Member of the Legis-  
 “ lative Body, while a man appointed to be  
 “ the immediate successor (*suppléant*) of  
 “ any Member of the Legislative Body,  
 “ may, under the title of Minister, exercise  
 “ all the authority of the Monarch. How-  
 “ ever, I do not think that your Commit-  
 “ tees mean to deprive any relation of the  
 “ King of the privilege of making his elec-  
 “ tion between the quality of French Citi-  
 “ zen, and the expectancy, whether near or  
 “ remote, of the Throne. I therefore move,  
 “ that you reject this article of your Commit-  
 “ tees purely and simply: but let me add,  
 “ that if you adopt it, I shall lay on the  
 “ table my formal renunciation of the rights  
 “ of



“ of a member of the reigning Dynasty,  
“ that I may possess those of a French  
“ Citizen.”

The Republicans, and particularly the active citizens with whom the galleries were filled, flattered that a Prince of the Blood-Royal should prefer the honour of becoming their comrade to that of retaining his own rank, were prodigal of their applauses on the Duke of *Orleans*'s civic degradation and purity of patriotism; while his baseness excited in the rest of the Assembly murmurs of indignation or the hootings of contempt. The more moderate Members of the Constitutional Party observed, that the Assembly having decided that they would not anticipate the effect of the renunciations of the reigning Family, the patriotic act of the Duke of *Orleans* ought not to influence the determination; that besides he had no right to renounce the Throne, either for himself, his children, or in respect of his creditors. “ Personal renunciations are always good,” replied this degraded Prince. His worthy friend *M. de Sillery* supported this opinion in a most disgusting patriotic speech, which the



the clamors of the galleries compelled the Assembly to order to be printed.

The discussion of this question was continued on the following day, and prolonged the Sitting till six in the evening. At length, after warm debates, which were terminated by a call of votes, it was decreed, that the members of the King's family should exercise the right of active citizens ; but that they should not be eligible to places and employments in the nomination of the People. The question as to the title to be given to them was adjourned.

It was decreed in the following Sitting, that the members of the Royal Family should be capable of holding places and employments in the King's nomination, except in the ministerial departments : that nevertheless, they should not have the chief command of any force by land or sea, nor fill the office of Ambassador, but with the consent of the Legislative Body, granted upon the King's desire ; and that they should bear no other than their Christian name, followed by the appellation of *French Prince*.

The last chapter of the Constitutional Act gave *M. Malouet* an opportunity of attacking the plan of the Committee with still  
more



more force than he had done at the opening of the debate. It related to the determining the time and conditions of exercising a new Constituent Power. The Committee proposed to fix the 1st of June 1800, for the period of convoking an Assembly of Revision, to be composed of 249 Members deputed by the departments, and authorised solely, “to re-establish the Constituted Powers in their limits, if they should have exceeded them, and to consider and determine upon reforming any part of the Constitution which may be petitioned for by the citizens, or proposed by the Legislative Body, or by the King.”

*M. Malouet* was not satisfied with demonstrating the absurdity of fixing so distant a period for reforms, which great and unforeseen inconveniences, and essential unperceived vices might render as urgent as necessary; he maintained, that the Constitution which had been decreed, could only be provisional until it had been submitted to a mature examination, and a free acceptance, as well on the part of the King, as on that of the Nation.

“We must at the same time,” said he, “put an end to the Revolution; that is to say, begin by annihilating all arrangements,  
“ments,



“ments, all acts inconsistent with the  
 “principles of your Constitution; for there  
 “is no reasonable man that can confide in  
 “its promise of safety and personal liberty,  
 “liberty of conscience, and respect for pro-  
 “perty, while he sees them violated. Thus  
 “your Committees of Inquiry, the laws  
 “against Emigrants, the multiplied oaths,  
 “and the violence that is the consequence  
 “of them, the persecution of the priests, ar-  
 “bitrary imprisonments, criminal proceed-  
 “ings against accused persons without any  
 “proofs, the fanaticism and tyranny of the  
 “Clubs; all these ought to disappear when  
 “the Constitution is presented, if you would  
 “have it freely accepted and put in execu-  
 “tion.” He concluded his speech with a  
 plan for a Decree, which after laying down  
 every point in the completest manner, stated,  
 1st. That a Deputation of sixty Members of  
 the Assembly should wait upon the King and  
 invite him to resume the reins of the Govern-  
 ment, to choose his guard, and place of re-  
 sidence, and to declare as soon as it was con-  
 venient for him, the modifications he should  
 think necessary in the Constitutional Act.  
 2dly. That the King’s declaration should be  
 addressed to all the Departments; and that  
 on



on the 1st of January 1793, the Primary Assemblies should be convoked, for the purpose of deliberating on the King's Declaration and upon the Constitutional Act; and that, in the mean time, every citizen should be at liberty to publish his sentiments respecting the New Constitution, which should nevertheless be provisionally executed. 3dly, That the result of the instructions of the majority of the Electoral Bodies should be taken into consideration by the Legislative Body, who should make such changes in the Constitution as should be pointed out by the National wish; and that the King should have a right to refuse his sanction to whatever should be deemed contrary to that wish\*.

This speech and plan for a Decree which was justly applauded by the members of the *Coté-Droit*, was often interrupted by the murmurs of the *Coté-Gauche* and of the Galleries. "I move," cried *Martineau* the advocate, "that this plan be referred to the Committees of Constitution and Revision. It contains excellent things towards

\* See the Collection of *M. Malouet's* Opinions, vol. iii. page 61.



the re-establishment of order and tranquillity in the Kingdom." This motion being seconded, was immediately opposed by the most violent clamours, and at last got rid of by the previous question. Some members of the *Coté-Gauche* said, *that this plan could only be referred to a Committee of Counter-Revolution.*

*Petion*, who spoke after *M. Malouet*, dwelt long upon the utility of National Conventions, and the necessity of rendering them periodical: treated as a mere subtility the distinction made by the Committee, between Assemblies of Revision and Conventions, and cited, at hap-hazard, England, America, &c. &c. But the most remarkable passage of this speech was that in which the speaker, without perceiving it, cast the clearest and justest censure upon the Assembly themselves. "How would it be possible," said he, "to give the Legislative Body the character and power of a Convention? Yet this would be the result of the Committees' plan. I say that if the Legislative Body be erected into a Convention, it would follow, that they should be allowed the power of constituting themselves at their pleasure, and also of reforming themselves at their pleasure."



ture. Now, nothing could be more absurd and more dangerous in principle than a body deriving its existence from itself alone, which should be accountable to itself alone, and which alone should be charged with correcting the abuses that might arise in its own bosom. Such a body would presently increase to a magnitude most formidable to the Nation. It would place itself above the Nation, upon which all bodies should depend, and would govern it."

This indiscretion, no doubt very innocently committed, frightened several members of the *Coté-Gauche* so much, that they strongly pressed the too simple *Petion* to confine himself to the question, and the Sitting broke up without any decision relative to National Conventions.

In the next Sitting, it being the order of the day, the same question was debated.—*Camus*, speaking on a motion of order, observed, that the plan of the Committee could not be entered upon; that the useless details which it contained, and all the different plans which it might suggest, and which it might be necessary to debate, would consume more time than the Assembly could devote to them, without the greatest danger.

" I believe,"



“ I believe,” said he, “ that if this Constitution is not very quickly terminated and presented to the King, that we shall have the greatest misfortunes to apprehend. Our weakness increases daily, and will increase every hour that we retard the conclusion of our labours. Factions arise in the Assembly—efforts have been made to divide us, and unhappily they have succeeded—we no longer know on which side to rally. I am very far from accusing any person, but I no longer see in this Assembly that noble, that grand majority, which called forth the Acts of the 17th and 20th of June 1789. Nor is this all. It is not enough to cast a mournful look on our weakness, our old age, our lassitude: we should also consider what is passing abroad. Observe, I intreat you, what the Ministers are doing, or rather what they are not doing. How many decrees have we passed which are not executed ! ”

*M. Malouet* proposed that the Assembly should, in the first place, declare whether they meant to submit the Constitution to the free acceptance of the Nation ; but this motion, which he several times repeated, was always repelled by murmurs and by



cries of—*To the order of the day!* At last, after a considerable debate, the Assembly decreed the following article :

“ The Nation possesses the unalienable  
“ right of revising the Constitution, when-  
“ ever it pleases ; but the Assembly declare  
“ that its interest urges it to suspend the  
“ exercise of that right for thirty years.”

It remained to be decreed how the Nation were to manifest and give their reasons for desiring a Convention ; and when and how this Convention should assemble. The plan which the Committee presented on this subject was opposed with equal strength and intrepidity by a Deputy, who had previously been little attended to in the Assembly, (*M. de Croix*). “ The Nation,” said he, “ have no other means of manifesting their wish but that of insurrection ; but they have already pointed out the only possible means of changing the Constitution. It is on the mode of attaining this object, and particularly with the view of putting an end to the monstrous state in which we are, and which is occasioned by the suspension of the functions of the  
the



the Royal authority, that I presume to offer you a few reflections, I shall draw them from the titles which have given me as well as you the right of voting in this Assembly. In those I every where see that the fundamental laws which are demanded by them cannot acquire the character which renders them obligatory, till they have received the King's sanction. They who appointed us to represent them manifested great prudence, and a decided will in this respect. They were sensible that their Representatives might err, and they sought a guarantee which should insure them that their political rights and liberty should not be endangered. They saw this guarantee in the Royal authority, and in the King, who had convoked them. They ordered that the laws should be enacted conjointly with him. A pretence has been found to envelop this question hitherto with a religious veil, which we must now tear from it, and it is impossible in discussing it, but that you will acknowledge the truth of what I have laid before you. These principles point out the conduct you ought to pursue, in order to revise and correct your work. It consists in causing it to be presented to the King by a Deputation, and in requesting



yourself to know the observations which the interest of the people shall suggest to him. Reflect upon the necessity of this measure, and remember that, if you do not adopt it, you will act in direct opposition to the strict order you received, and will be loaded with the dreadful responsibility of having decreed alone upon the fate of a great Nation, against the wish they have manifested. You are not the Nation, you are only their Representatives, and it was the will of the Nation that the King should be your moderator. I shall not criticise the Constitution.— I confine myself to asking whether there is one of us who is so arrogant as to think that he has never been mistaken in the course of our labours, and who, if it were in his power, would not desire to make some changes? I move, therefore, the previous question as to the plan of the Committee; and that a Deputation be charged to present the Constitutional Act to the King to-morrow at farthest, and to entreat him to go to whatever place he may think proper, for the security of the liberty of his person, and of the freedom of his consent; and that moreover his Majesty be entreated to send to the Assembly such observations as his wisdom  
and



and the interest of the people may dictate to him, in order that they may deliberate upon them."

The speaker was often interrupted by cries of—*To the order of the day!* and it was even several times proposed that he should be called to order, for censuring all the operations of the Assembly, and seeking to destroy the very basis of the Constitution. In the number of those who spoke after *M. de Croix*, no one attempted to confute his arguments, or repel his censure. Some presented new plans, and others confined themselves to attacking that of the Committees; and the Assembly finished by deciding, that when three successive legislatures should declare a uniform wish for the revision of some constitutional articles, a revision should take place. That the fourth legislature should be charged with the examination of these articles; and that, in this case, the members of the third legislature could not be re-elected for the fourth. The Assembly on the next day decreed, that no motion should be made for a revival of the Constitution before the third legislature.

The form in which the Constitutional Act



should be presented to the King, was regulated by the following Decree :

Art. 1. A Deputation shall be named to present the Constitutional Act for the King's acceptance.

Art. 2. The King shall be desired to issue such orders as he may think proper, for his guard and for the dignity of his person.

Art. 3. If the King yield to the wish of the French by adopting the Constitutional Act, he shall be requested to appoint a day, and regulate the forms in which he will solemnly pronounce, in the presence of the National Assembly, his acceptance of the Constitutional Royalty, and his engagement to fulfill the duties of it.

This Decree, proposed by the Committee of the Constitution, was introduced by a speech which the constitutionalists and their profelytes admired as a master-piece of eloquence, and of which at present it is impossible to read a single sentence without indignation or disgust; because we find throughout, the most strenuous apology for systems and opinions, which the Revolution

1



lution has devoted to general abhorrence.

After passing this Decree the Assembly determined that the Constitutional Act should not be presented to the King, until it had been entirely read over again, and till they had declared that no change should be made in it.

In the debates on these two Decrees, the brutality or rather the regicide ferocity of *Robespierre* manifested itself to such a degree that, except some furious Republicans, the Assembly were all shocked, and shewed their disapprobation by the most violent murmurs. “ I do not see,” said he, “ even a specious reason for changing the present state of things with respect to the King. I declare that I do not even comprehend the words liberty and constraint applied on such an occasion. I cannot conceive how, in any case, the will of *Louis XVI.* can be supposed to have been constrained; for the presentation of the Constitution may be reduced to these words:—The Nation offers you the most powerful Throne in the world: here is the title by which you are appointed to it. Will you accept it or not? It is not the Constitution which we are going to offer to



*Louis XVI*, for his examination, but this question : Will you be King of the French ? Now, I maintain, in giving his answer, the King will be just as free in Paris as any where else. And pray in what spot of the Empire can he be better than in the midst of a numerous and faithful guard of citizens that surround him ? What mean all these whimsical scruples about the liberty of accepting a Crown ? What people who had a Crown to dispose of, ever thought of saying to the citizen, upon whose head they were about to place it :—*Go away from us—we leave you at liberty to go to the extremities of the Empire, whithersoever you will, that we may correspond more freely with you ?*”

In the midst of the tumult and clamors excited by the blasphemies of this villain, *M. de Montlosier* was at last suffered to be heard, and said in the name of the members of the *Coté-Droit*, “ In a determination so derogatory to the Royal Majesty and Monarchical Government, we can only demand that our profound indignation, and our silence, be recorded.”

The following day, at the moment when the last reading of the Constitutional Act was



was about to commence, *M. Malouet* rose to speak to order, and said: “ On this grand occasion the Assembly should be careful not to fall into inconsistency. I have examined your Journals, and hold in my hand the Address which you presented to the King on the 9th of July 1789. You then said to him: *You have called upon us to fix the Constitution in concert with you, and to operate the regeneration of the Kingdom. The National Assembly come solemnly to declare to you, that your wishes shall be accomplished.* Have you received new powers from the Nation?—Certainly not. By what title, by what right then would you be the only legislators, after having acknowledged and declared yourselves, that you could do nothing without the King’s concurrence? That declaration of your principles was made too openly and solemnly to be retracted. I ask then, if in presenting the Constitutional Act to the King, and leaving him no alternative but that of accepting it, pure and unconditionally, or else refusing it—I ask, I say, if the King will not be warranted in representing to you the Act entered in your Journals? ”

This unexpected argument greatly irritated the  
the



the members of the *Coté-Gauche*, and embarrassed them to such a degree that, fearing to increase *M. Malouet's* triumph by opposing him, they only answered by the most noisy murmurs, and by redoubled cries of—*No, no! To the order of the day!* The Assembly made haste to obey these vociferations, and the Galleries celebrated the victory by long applauses.

At length on the 3d of September the Assembly decreed unanimously, that is to say, the Members of the *Coté-Gauche*, all those of the *Coté-Droit* keeping silence, that the Constitutional Act was closed; that they could make no further change in it; and that it should be carried to the King the same day by a Deputation of sixty Members, whom the President was authorised to name, all of whom he chose from the *Coté-Gauche*, except *M. Malouet*, who did not feel himself much flattered in being thus distinguished from the other Members of the *Coté-Droit*, and suffered the fifty-nine Deputies to depart without him.

The period of revising the Constitution might have been attended with many advantageous changes if the Royalists had been less repugnant to every idea of a reconciliation

ation



ation with the Constitutionalists. The latter were no longer blind to the principal defects of their work, and they heartily wished to reform them, if it could be done without endangering their popularity. For this purpose, *Barnave* and *Chapelier* had agreed with *M. Malouet* upon a plan, which could not have failed to succeed if the members of the *Coté-Droit* had supported, not merely by their applauses but their votes, the general censure which *M. Malouet* was to cast upon the Constitutional Act, and which in fact he did in the Sitzings of the 8th of August. The Constitutionalists were to reply forcibly to this attack, and to defend pertinaciously every article, the execution of which drew along with it no danger; but with respect to the regulations which *M. Malouet* had pointed out as Anti-monarchical, or tending to obstruct the action of the Government, he was to be answered pettishly, that his censure was as useless as premature; that the Assembly had no need to be informed that there were in the Constitutional Decrees some articles which it became their wisdom to modify; that the principal task of the Committee of Revision, which they had established,

blished,



blished, was to propose those modifications, and that they were ready to perform it.

These modifications, agreed upon with *M. Malouet*, were nearly the same as those which he proposed in the Sitting of the 8th of August; but this plan had not been concerted with the Members of the *Coté-Droit*; and it is even doubtful whether they would have acceded to it: for it was then the opinion of a great majority of the Royalists, that the new Constitution must necessarily perish through its own defects; and that great care should be taken not to reform a single one of them, since that would be weakening the principle of its destruction\*. Be that as it may, the resolution of the Members of the *Coté-Droit* to persist in their declaration of taking no part in the Consti-

\* This opinion would be a very just one applied to ordinary laws, and made in tranquil times, because no government, no person, has an interest in supporting them, but so far as their execution proves that they are just, wise, and useful; but it is not the case in a new Constitution, produced amidst the convulsions and storms of the most violent revolution. Such a law, however defective it may be, is always supported by the vanity, the interest, and by all the power of the successful party.



tutional Act, was known when *M. Malouet* made his motion. It was no less certain, that the Republican Party, reinforced by the Clubs, would strongly oppose every modification tending to the re-establishment of any Monarchical principle or form. In this state of affairs, the Constitutionals not feeling themselves sufficiently powerful to struggle with the Jacobins without being supported by the Royalists, did not hesitate, without informing *M. Malouet*, to abandon the plan which they had concerted with him. He had scarcely stated the opinion upon which he was going to speak, when *Chapelier* was the first to exclaim *against the blasphemy*; and moved, that every discussion that tended to the smallest change in the Constitution should be formally forbidden. This motion, being supported by all the *Coté-Gauche*, and by the clamours of the galleries, was immediately decreed, and compelled *M. Malouet* to silence.

The Deputation charged with presenting the Constitutional Act to the King, went to the Palace on the 3d of September, at nine o'clock at night, amidst the applauses of the People, and escorted by numerous detachments



ments of the Parisian National Guard and Gendarmerie. They were received in the Council Hall, whither the King, accompanied by the Ministers and several other persons, had come to wait for them. In delivering the Constitution to his Majesty, the speaker of the Deputation (*Thouret*) addressed him in these words: “Sire, The  
“Representatives of the Nation are come  
“to offer for the acceptance of your Ma-  
“jesty the Constitutional Act, which con-  
“secrates the indubitable rights of the  
“French People, which maintains the  
“true dignity of the Throne, and which  
“regenerates the government of the Em-  
“pire.”

The King made the following answer, and delivered it in his own hand-writing to the Deputation: “Gentlemen, I will examine  
“the Constitution which the National As-  
“sembly has charged you to present to me;  
“and will inform them of my resolution  
“as soon as the time required for the  
“examination of so important a subject  
“will permit me. I have resolved to re-  
“main in Paris; and I shall give such  
“orders to the Commander of the Parisian  
“National



“ National Guard as I shall think proper  
“ for the service of my Guard.”

The Deputation then returned to the Assembly to give an account of their mission. They reported, that during the whole time the King appeared with a satisfied countenance.

“ What we saw,” added the speaker; “ what  
“ we heard, every thing prognosticates that  
“ the completion of the Constitution will  
“ also be the conclusion of the Revolution.”

On the next day, Sunday, the Tuileries were opened; the insolent orders of *M. de la Fayette* were at length taken off, and such orders as it pleased the King to give to him substituted in their place. Early in the morning an immense crowd filled the Chapel of the Palace. When the King and the Royal Family entered to hear Mass, the cries of *Vive la Nation! Vive la Constitution! Vive le Roi, pourvu qu'il signe!* (provided he sign) were the only attentions which this stupid multitude had the brutality to pay their Majesties. These were the only sentiments which these *good Parisians* expressed to *Louis XVI.* whom they had been humbling, insulting, and keeping in captivity  
for



for more than two months. *Vive le Roi, pourvu qu'il signe!* Was not this saying in other terms: *Meure le Roi, s'il ne signe pas, Let him die if he does not sign?*—These regicide clamours will be an eternal evidence against the pretended liberty allowed the King in the acceptance of the Constitution.



## CHAPTER XLV.

*Different Counsels given to the King on the Acceptance of the Constitution—Alarm of the Leaders of the Constitutional Party and of the Ministers—They persuade the King to determine upon the simple and unconditional Acceptance of the Constitution—View of the Revolution, and of the State of Parties—The Order of the Holy Ghost suppressed—Final Discussion of the Union of the Comtat of Avignon with France—The King's Letter to the Assembly, in which he announces that he accepts the Constitution—Amnesty—Deputation to the King—His Majesty's Answer—Insolence of the Assembly—The King takes his Oath—The President's Speech to him—Public Rejoicings—Conference at Pilnitz—A Letter from the Princes to the*

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*King—State of France at this Period—Decree against the Clubs—Violent Debates occasioned by a Report on the Finances—Deputations—Speeches—The King goes to close the Assembly—His Majesty's Speech—The President's Answer—The Assembly dissolved.*

THE determination to be made by the King, in such critical circumstances, was undoubtedly of very great importance. All the Ministers, except *M. de Montmorin*, insisted on the absolute necessity of accepting the Constitution, purely and unconditionally. They owed their places to the authors of it, and the advice which they gave to the King often favoured of their gratitude to the Constitutional Faction. Both the opinions and interest of the leaders of that Party, *Barnave*, *Duport*, *d'André*, and the *Lameths*, were at this time different from those of *M. de la Fayette*, who considered them as factious men. They were however much more sensible than he of the dangerous consequences of their systems, and would have been very glad to lend their aid to every modification, to every expedient which did not endanger their popularity. The consequence of the  
King's



King's arrest at Varennes had opened their eyes; *Duport* and *Barnave* frequently felt remorse with melancholy presages of the future. But the more they were suspected of having returned to Monarchical principles and to sentiments of concern and respect for the King and Royal Family, the less did they dare, at this decisive period, to advise a resistance which they thought useless; they therefore wrote to the King, that whatever were the defects of the Constitution, his Majesty could neither reject nor modify it, and that his safety required his pure and unconditional acceptance of it. The Prince *de Kaunitz* was also of this opinion, in his confidential correspondence with *M. de Montmorin*. The Emperor *Leopold* and his Minister were at that time struck only with the ascendancy of the Jacobins, with their intrigues, and their manifest tendency to Republicanism. The Prince *de Kaunitz* perfectly understood and judged rightly of the new Constitution. He detested its principles, he despised its authors, and never mentioned them in his correspondence but with indignation: but being very accurately informed of what was passing in France, and seeing that unfortunate Kingdom divided into clubs



of Jacobins, whose audacity and crimes were continually increasing, he no longer hesitated to consider the Constitutional Party as the only refuge of Royalty; for, like the Emperor, he was very far from having any idea of engaging in a new war, or advising *Louis XVI.* to measures that might lead to it, without being first assured of the success of the negotiation entered into by his Imperial Majesty to unite all the other Powers of Europe against France; and of those there were some who were by no means decided upon entering into that coalition.

This confidential correspondence of *M. de Montmorin's* should, if he did not burn it, be still in existence, for it was not found among the papers that were seized at his house. It explained and justified, in many respects, the weakness with which he was reproached. He has even been accused of betraying his unfortunate master. I am not afraid to say, that he was as incapable of it as myself, and I trust my proofs remain not yet to be established; but, acquainted as he was with the dispositions of the Foreign Courts, would he not have deceived, would he not have betrayed his Majesty, had he made him hope for their support, had he inspired him with



a confidence which he himself had not?— When he informed me of the opinion of the other Ministers, of his doubts, and of those of the King, I answered him warmly, that it was impossible the King should accept a Constitution that dethroned him. He said, that I was not the first who had given that opinion, and convinced me of it, by shewing me a letter which the Abbé *Maury* had written to the King, and in which that illustrious character painted the misfortunes and the crimes of the Revolution sanctioned by the Constitutional Act. Religion, the Monarchy, property, overthrown, and the King delivered up to the poignards of the Factious, if he should thus put himself into their hands. “ Well !” said I to him, “ what can be opposed to these truths ?”— “ The King’s arrest,” replied he, “ and the “ sentiments manifested at that period, “ showed us to what a height the people “ are intoxicated with this Constitution, “ which all its authors, except *Target*, “ would now abjure if they dared : besides, the “ King dreads above all things appearing in “ opposition to the National wish, and be- “ ing drawn into a civil war. The opinion “ of Prince *Kaunitz*, and his arguments,



“ made a great impresson upon him. The  
“ Abbé *Maury's* letter has taught us  
“ nothing; it is not reason we want, but  
“ power. *Malouet's* advice is not less im-  
“ practicable \*. He would have the King  
“ comment candidly and very circumstan-  
“ tially upon the defects and dangers of this  
“ Constitution, and declare that he accepts  
“ it only provisionally, till the Nation shall  
“ finally make their wishes known by new  
“ mandates to their Deputies, or by a new  
“ convocation. *Malouet's* Memorial, drawn  
“ up in the same spirit as his Speech upon  
“ the Constitutional Act, had a great effect  
“ on the King, and he would perhaps have  
“ adopted that measure, if *M. de Malesherbes*  
“ had not joined with me in showing his  
“ Majesty, that it would equally irritate the  
“ Constitutionalists and the Jacobins, who  
“ are the only parties at present that possess  
“ influence, while the most zealous Roy-  
“ alists, persecuted and powerless in the  
“ Country, or assembled abroad, cannot be  
“ of any use without the support of the

\* *M. de Montmorin* had been charged by the King to consult *M. de Malesherbes*, *M. Le Gouvé*, and *M. Malouet*, upon the acceptance of the Constitution.



“ Powers whom we cannot solicit, and upon  
 “ whom we cannot rely.”

I represented to *M. de Montmorin*, that of whatever weight *M. de Malesherbes's* authority was, I could not be of his opinion, unless he were to prove to me the reality of the dangers which he saw, and which I could not see, in *M. Malouet's* advice ; that although an absolute refusal might endanger the King's safety, it was different with respect to a provisional acceptance, upon grounds which, far from being considered as an offence, would clearly be an homage paid by the Monarch to the Nation ; that the intoxication of the people was but temporary ; that to demonstrate to them, on their own experience, that the new institutions were the sole cause of the troubles and the anarchy that prevailed, would be enough to sober them ; that it was the more to be wished that this means too of rectifying the public opinion should be tried as the worst that could happen was, that the Assembly might declare, that a provisional acceptance was not sufficient, but that the King was held to accept purely and unconditionally ; that supposing they should dare to pass such a Decree, which was very doubtful,



ful, the King would but be placed in the same situation, and would not have to reproach himself for not having done every thing that was in his power to avoid the disasters which would result from his acceptance.

*M. de Montmorin* became entirely of this opinion, but in a Committee, held a few days afterwards, at the house of the Keeper of the Seals, *Duport* and *Barnave*, alarmed at the violent attacks made upon them by the Jacobins in all their Journals, and even in the Assembly, where *Robespierre* had by name denounced them as traitors to the Country, talked of so many, and such great calamities, if the King should decide on a provisional acceptance, and the Ministers were so alarmed at it, that they prevailed upon his Majesty to accept the Constitutional Act purely and unconditionally.

Thus did *Louis XVI.* consent to enter upon the fatal agreement of executing a Constitution which in itself could not be executed. His pure and religious heart was too well known to leave any doubt of his taking the oath with a firm resolution of being faithful to it, or of his being capable of following the example of his perfidious enemies,



enemies, who, while they were swearing fidelity to him, as well as to the Law and to the Nation, were meditating and preparing to overturn the Throne, enslave the Nation, and annihilate the Laws. Such in fact was the known plan of the Jacobins, at the head of whom at that time were *Petion*, *Brissot*, *Condorcet*, *Robespierre*, *Camille-Desmoulins*, *Buzot*, and others. It is not irrelevant to explain how the Constitution-  
alists, who had founded and raised this sect, were entangled in their own nets, when they wished to separate from them.

*Mirabeau*, the ablest of them all, in spite of his errors, crimes, and inconsistencies, wished by the Revolution to gain the Ministry for himself, and liberty for the people, but leaving the Monarch a great share of power, the Nobility their rank and titles, and the Clergy the means of subsisting with all becoming decency. It was only to render himself formidable or necessary, that he became sometimes the leader and at other times the follower of the Factious; but he was always ready to oppose them, and only waited till the Court thought proper to employ him. He had no confidential friends among his colleagues, except the Duke *de Biron*,



*Biron*, the Bishop of *Autun*, and the Count *de la Mark*. All the others were his enemies or his dupes. The Abbé *Sieyes*, who detested him, and who like him held in contempt all parties and systems, that did not agree with his metaphysics, wished, as in Poland, for *the King and the French Republic*: no Nobility, but a richly endowed Clergy, provided all were reformed who believed in God. His haughtiness, sophistry, and puritanical air, and the credit he had for great talents, kept the Revolutionary herd in awe, and did not suffer either the Constitution-*alists* or *Jacobins* openly to separate from him, both of them occasionally requiring his assistance.

The real fabricators of the Constitution, such as *Target*, *Thouret*, *Emery*, *Desmeuniers*, &c. acknowledged *M. de la Fayette* as their nominal leader; but before the King's departure for *Montmedy* they yielded, whether willingly or not, to the direction of the *Lameths*, *Duport*, and *Barnave*, all enemies of *M. de la Fayette*, because he rivalled them in popularity, and counterbalanced their power by the empire he possessed over the hearts of the *Bourgeois* of *Paris*, and over all the enthusiastic admirers



mirers of the Rights of Man, of which he had been the mover, so true is it that popular heroes constantly resemble one another in one particular, which always makes them enemies when it does not unite them ; the love of exclusive power.

The King's arrest formed a new æra in the Revolution, which may be regarded as the epocha of the disorganization of all the parties, one only excepted, which reaped an advantage from the fall of the others. The Jacobins having endeavoured in vain to bring the King to a trial, and proclaim France a Republic, turned upon the Constitutionalists, who opposed it, drove them from their post and took possession of it themselves. *Brissot*, who was then the soul of this Club, and the chief of the secret Committee, who directed its operations, judged very rightly that the Jacobins could not overturn this weak Constitution by any other means than by adopting it ; and that it was by declaring themselves its guardians, they might discredit its authors, and succeed in destroying the remainder of Royalty, which the latter had left defenceless.

The leaders of the Constitutional Party seeing themselves thus attacked, and in danger

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ger of being soon supplanted by the most ferocious Revolutionists, divided into two sects ; one of them, hoping to retain the favour of the populace, preserved the appearance and language of the Jacobins, who, nevertheless, denounced them as traitors ; the other party, still more odious to them, secretly attached themselves to the King, without adopting or proposing any measure to rescue him from danger.

*M. de la Fayette*, immoveable in his respect for the rights of men, and in his confidence in the Constitutional attachment of the Parisian National Guard, thought himself in a condition to triumph over the Republicans and what he called the intriguers of his party.

The King's arrest was also followed by a division of the Royal Party. Some were for defending his cause to the last, others thought they should take no further part in the determinations of the Assembly ; but this difference of opinion had produced no contest or bitterness in the *Coté-Droit* ; for on all important questions, that upon the two Chambers excepted, the *Coté-Droit*, had been always unanimous, so impossible was it for the honest partisans of a mild Monarchy,



chy, as well as those of an absolute one, to support the principles and Revolutionary measures of the majority of the Assembly ; but even this very agreement of the Royal Party as to the fundamental basis of the Monarchical Government produced no other effect on the multitude than that of marking them all as the partisans of despotism, while their disagreement as to the system, left to none of their sub-divisions the consistency or force of a party. Thus, all disappeared, all sunk, before the sanguinary cohort of the Jacobins, who were already fabricating in their Clubs, the catastrophes of the 10th of August, the 2d of September, &c. &c. Their determinations each day acquired a greater degree of violence—to their war-cry *The Constitution or death*, they had added the word *Equality*. To familiarise the people's minds to the ideas of hatred and vengeance, they confounded, and pointed out all their adversaries, under the denomination of *enemies to Liberty and Equality*. At the same time they supported in the National Assembly every motion made by the members of the *Coté-Droit*, tending to its dissolution, because they were well assured that



that their successors would soon annihilate the vain phantom of Royalty which stood in their way.

The Constitutionalists dispirited, found themselves no longer able to hold the reins of the Revolution.

The *pure Royalists*\*, deceived by the hopes of a powerful coalition in favour of *Louis XVI.* looked forward to the dissolution of the Assembly, and very rarely attended the Sittings. Several of them were even preparing to set off for Coblenz, should the King accept the Constitution.

The *less pure* Royalists denominated *Monarchiens*† and *Monarchistes*‡, were disgusted at the active part they had taken, and viewed in the dissolution of the Assembly, a period to the insults and menaces which they were every day obliged to undergo. One alone among them highly distinguished

\* Those who wished for the ancient Monarchy and ancient system.

† Those who wished for the New Constitutional Monarchy, with some modifications in the Constitution.

‡ Those who wished for a Monarchical Government of any kind, solidly established.



for his good sense and talents, *M. de Clermont-Tonnere*, foreseeing that the second Assembly would be still worse than the first, was willing to prolong the sessions of the present Assembly, in order to superintend the trial of the new system which they had established, and to make all the reforms which experience might show to be necessary. He spoke of it to *Barnave* and to *Chapelier*, whom he thought to find disposed to support the motion which he proposed to make to that effect; but they advised him against it. “We are worn out,” said they, “we shall  
“be driven away as well as you and your  
“party, if we do not go of our own accord. It is only in our Departments, and  
“by occupying places under the Government, that we can henceforth do any  
“good.” These Constitutionalists, as presumptuous as guilty, still conceived themselves to be persons of importance. Odious to all parties, despised by every honest man, and authors of all the calamities which then desolated France, and of those too which the new laws would introduce, how could they conceal from themselves not only that they were no longer good for aught, but that the  
general



general indignation would pursue them to the obscurest retreats, regardless of their barren remorse?

Such is the exact picture of the Revolution, and of the state of the different parties in France, at the period in which the King was deliberating on the acceptance of the Constitutional Act. Ten days had scarcely elapsed after it was presented to him, when it was rumoured that his Majesty had agreed to the pure and unconditional acceptance of it. This news being confirmed, *M. Despremenil*, in the Sitting of the 12th of September, asked permission to lay on the table the declaration of a very great number of his colleagues respecting the Constitutional Act. Most of the members of the *Coté-Droit* rose to testify their concurrence. The members of the *Coté-Gauche* answered the request only by bursts of laughter, and disposed of it by moving the order of the day, the subject of which was the petition of the people of Avignon, for a union of the Comtat with France.—The reporter (*M. de Menou*,) concluded with proposing, that this union should be decreed, indemnifying the Pope. The

Abbé



Abbé *Maury*, prepared with a multitude of proofs of the greatest weight, and with all the power of his talents, opposed the reporter's proposal, as contrary to the free wishes of the majority of the inhabitants of the Comtat, and undertook to prove, by irresistible documents, that the Commissioners, sent as Mediators to Avignon, had acted contrary to what their mission prescribed, and had made themselves accomplices of the villains who were ruining that unhappy country.

In the following Sitting, before the debate upon the affair of Avignon was resumed, it was observed, that, as the King and the Prince-Royal might be expected every moment in the Assembly, it would be right to settle whether the order of the Holy Ghost should be suffered to exist, that the King might know whether to appear or not in the blue ribbon. Upon this impertinent motion it was decreed, that no Frenchman should wear the badges of any order, except the military one, (*the Croix de St. Louis*,) but that, nevertheless, the King and Prince-Royal should be privileged to wear the blue ribbon.



After this the Abbé *Maurry* ascended the tribune, and in consequence of the engagement he entered into the day before, to prove the treachery of the Commissioners sent to Avignon, he read in their presence, an act of accusation, written and signed by his own hand, in which he desired to be authorised to prosecute them, on his own responsibility, in the high National Court at Orleans, for having been guilty in the exercise of their office, of the most iniquitous partiality, of the most shocking abuses of confidence and authority, and of constantly affording the most scandalous protection to all the brigands, &c. submitting himself, in case his accusation should be judged ill-founded to every civil reparation, as well as to all costs and expences. The recital of the facts upon which these accusations were founded, and the reading of the papers which contained the proofs of them, were often interrupted by clamours and insults bestowed upon the speaker. The accused Commissioners answered him only by miserable subterfuges or sarcasms; but powerfully protected by the *Coté-Gauche* and by the Galleries, they had no need of being innocent to be justified, and



and all that they said in their defence was loudly applauded, almost at every sentence. One of them was still speaking when the Keeper of the Seals entered and gave the President the letter by which the King announced to the Assembly his acceptance of the Constitution. This letter was couched in the following terms :

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ I have attentively examined the Constitutional Act, which you have presented for my acceptance ; I accept it, and I will cause it to be executed. This declaration at another time might have sufficed ; at present I owe it to the interests of the Nation, I owe it to myself to make known my motives.

“ From the very outset of my reign I have been anxious for the reform of abuses, and in all the acts of the Government, I have been fond of taking the public opinion for a rule.

“ Various causes, in the number of which we must place the situation of the Finances, at my accession to the Throne, and the immense expences of an honourable war, for a long time sustained without an increase of



taxes, had created a considerable disproportion between the revenues and expences of the State. Struck with the extent of the evil, I not only considered how it might be remedied, but I felt the necessity of preventing its return. I conceived a plan of fixing the happiness of the people upon a solid basis, and of subjecting the authority of which I was myself the depositary to invariable rules ; and I called the Nation around me to put it into execution.

“ In the course of the events of the Revolution, my intentions have never varied. When, after reforming the old institutions, you began to replace them by the first essays of your work, I did not wait till the Constitution was completely known to me, before I gave my assent to them. I favoured the establishment of its parts, even before I could judge of the whole, and if the disorders which have accompanied almost all the periods of the Revolution, too often afflicted my heart, I hoped that the law would recover its force, in the hands of the new authorities, and that as you drew near to the end of your labours, each day would restore that respect to it, without which the people can  
enjoy



enjoy neither liberty nor happiness. I long cherished that hope, and till it forsook me my resolution never changed.

“ Let every one call to mind the period at which I left Paris: the Constitution was nearly completed, and yet the authority of the laws seemed daily to diminish. Public opinion, far from being fixed, was subdivided by a multitude of parties; the most violent opinions alone seemed to obtain favour; the licentiousness of writings exceeded all bounds—no authority was respected.

“ I could no longer trace the general will in the laws, which I saw every where without force and without execution. I must say, that had you at that time presented me with the Constitution, I should not have thought that the interest of the people, which has been the constant and only rule of my conduct, permitted me to accept it. I had but one sentiment—I formed but one plan—I wished to withdraw from all parties, and to know what was really the wish of the Nation.

“ The motives by which I was guided no longer exist. Since that time the inconveniences and the evils of which I complained, have struck you as well as me. You have



manifested a will to establish order ; you have paid attention to the want of discipline in the army ; you have seen the necessity of correcting the abuses of the press. The revision of your work has placed in the number of legal regulations many articles which had been presented to me as Constitutional. You have appointed forms for the revision of those which you have placed in the Constitution. In fine, I no longer doubt the wish of the People : I have seen it at once manifested by their attachment to your work, and by their adherence to the maintenance of the Monarchical Government.

“ I therefore accept the Constitution. I engage to maintain it at home, to defend it from all attacks abroad, and to cause it to be executed by all the means which it places in my power.

“ I declare, that knowing the attachment of the great majority of the People to the Constitution, I renounce the co-operation which I claimed in the work, and as I am responsible only to the Nation, none else have a right to complain of my renouncing it.

“ I should, however, not say the truth, if I affected to perceive, in the means of execution and administration, all the energy that  
2 would



would be necessary to give motion, and preserve unity in all the parts of a vast Empire; but as opinions are at present divided on these subjects, I consent to their being left to the determination of experience. If I faithfully use all the means which have been placed in my hands, no blame can be thrown upon me, and the Nation whose interest alone ought to serve as a rule, will then explain themselves by the means which the Constitution has reserved for them.

“ But, Gentlemen, for the securing of Liberty, for the stability of the Constitution, and for the individual happiness of every Frenchman, there are interests concerning which an imperious duty prescribes to us the union of all our efforts. These interests are, respect for the laws, the establishment of order, and the re-union of all the citizens. Now, that the Constitution is finally decreed, Frenchmen, living under the same laws, ought to know no other enemies than those who infringe them. In discord and anarchy, we see our common enemies. I will combat them with all my power. It is necessary that you and your successors should second my efforts with



energy ; that without meaning to fetter thought, the law should afford protection also to all those who submit their actions to it ; and that they who from fear of persecutions and troubles had left their country, should, when they return, be certain of finding safety and tranquillity. To extinguish animosities, to soften the evils which a great Revolution ever brings with it, and in order that the law may from this day begin to be fully executed, let us consent to an oblivion of the past, and let the accusations and the prosecutions which have arisen from the events of the Revolution, be abandoned in a general reconciliation.

“ I speak not of those who have been solely actuated by their attachment to my person : Could you, in that, consider any as guilty ? As for those, who through excesses in which I might perceive personal injuries, have drawn upon themselves the prosecution of the laws, I feel in respect to them that I am the King of the French.

“ (Signed) LOUIS.

“ *Paris, September 13th, 1791.*

“ P. S. I think, Gentlemen, that I ought to pronounce my solemn acceptance  
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of the Constitution, in the very place where it was formed: I shall consequently to-morrow at noon, come to the National Assembly."

Cries of *Vive le Roi! Bravo! bravo!* accompanied by great applauses, broke out several times during the reading of this letter, and were redoubled at the sentence in which the King declared, that *he renounced the co-operation which he had claimed in the work of the Constitution*, as if this tardy and forced renunciation of a co-operation which the Assembly had constantly and formally refused to his Majesty, although it was unanimously prescribed in all the instructions to the members, could be of any validity. However, the *Coté-Gauche*, enchanted with that paragraph, called for its being read again, which they obtained by repeated cries of *encore*. The Hall resounded for some minutes with clappings and shouts of joy, which formed a very striking contrast to the dead silence which reigned among the *Coté-Droit*.

*M. de la Fayette* then moved, that according to the King's desire, all persons confined on account of his Majesty's departure, should



should be set at liberty ; that an immediate stop be put to all proceedings relative to the the events of the Revolution ; and that the use of passports, and all temporary restraints upon the liberty of going and coming, as well in as out of the Kingdom should be annulled. The Assembly adopted the proposal of *M. de la Fayette* by acclamation, and appointed a Deputation of sixty of its members, to go immediately and present this Decree to the King, and express to him the delight they had felt on hearing his Majesty's letter read. The Keeper of the Seals left the Hall amidst applauses, and went to inform the King of the Deputation that was coming to him.— As soon as they had set off, the Assembly, transported with rapture, broke up the Sitting.

The Deputation being introduced to the King, addressed him in the following speech:

“ Sire, The letter which your Majesty sent to the National Assembly has been read to them ; they interrupted the reading of it by repeated applauses, which alone can express the sentiments with which the French People have been so long animated for  
blood



for their Kings. The Assembly partake your Majesty's desire to extinguish all animosities, to put an end to all dissensions; and being anxious to distinguish this grand epocha by all that can render it solemn, have hastened to pass a decree which obliterates every trace of a Revolution now concluded. They have charged us to bring that Decree to your Majesty, and here it is\*."

The King heard it read, was greatly affected by it, and answered with an air of satisfaction: "I shall always feel it a pleasure as well as a duty to follow the will of the Nation when I am acquainted with it. I am sensible of the readiness with which the National Assembly have complied with the desire I expressed that they should pass an act of grace. This day will be memorable in history. I wish it may put an end to discord; that it may unite all, and that we may be but one. I am informed," added the King, "that the National Assembly have this morning passed a Decree relative to the Blue Ribbon, with which they have exclu-

\* In the final drawing up of the Decree which was adopted the following day, the revocation of the Decree relative to the Emigrants was expressly passed.



sively honoured myself and my son. As I never set any other value on this decoration but that of being able to bestow it upon others, I am determined to lay aside the Blue Ribbon. I request you to inform the Assembly of my resolution.”

The Queen and her children being at the door of the Council-Chamber where the Deputation was received, the King said: “There are my wife and children who partake my sentiments.” The Queen advanced towards the Deputies, and with her own lips confirmed what the King had said.

These particulars were reported the day following at the opening of the Sitting by the Speaker of the Deputation, and excited great applause. The Assembly then resumed the debate upon the affair of Avignon, and concluded by adopting the reporter’s proposal.

The Members of the *Coté-Gauche* very soon manifested that the joy which they had shown on hearing the King’s answer was not connected with any intention favourable to his Majesty. In the suppression of the Blue Ribbon they only considered the annihilation of an Order too illustrious to be within their reach; and the affecting sentiment



ment which the King had expressed in his paternal wish, “*that we may be but one,*” only flattered their foolish vanity. They were so ridiculously elated at this moment, that the President having seriously proposed to the Assembly to decide whether they ought not to keep their seats while the King, who was expected, took his oath, the Members of the *Cote-Gauche* vociferated, To be sure! To be sure! and *the King standing with his hat off!* This arrangement was adopted, amidst the shouts and clappings of the galleries, in spite of the remonstrances of the members of the *Coté-Droit*. When silence was restored, *M. Malouet* observed that there was no circumstance in which the National Assembly in the King’s presence did not acknowledge him as their Chief; that, not to treat the Chief of the State with the respect due to him, was a slight to the Nation as much as to the Monarch. He moved in consequence, that as the King was to take his oath standing, the Assembly should also hear it in the same attitude. This observation made an impression on many Members of the *Coté-Gauche*, and the motion would perhaps have been decreed, had not a Breton Deputy (*Languinais*)



nais) cried out in a shrill tone, that he had an amendment to make which would suit every body. "Let us decree," said he, "that *M. Malouet*, and whoever else pleases, shall be permitted to receive the King kneeling, but let us adhere to our arrangement." This silly jest had its full effect; they who were tickled with it were still laughing when the King entered the Hall accompanied by all the Ministers, and with no other decoration than that of the *Croix de St. Louis*.

Two chairs of the same size, both covered with velvet, wrought with golden *fleurs-de-lis*, were placed before the President's table. The King went up to it, and placing himself on the left of the President, spoke in these terms :

"Gentlemen, I come to consecrate  
"solemnly here my acceptance of the Con-  
"stitutional Act. I swear, in consequence,  
"to be faithful to the Nation and to the  
"Law, to employ all the power delegated  
"to me, to maintain the Constitution de-  
"creed by the Constituent National Assem-  
"bly \* ; and to cause the laws to be exe-  
"cuted

\* The King at this moment perceiving that he was  
the



“ cuted. May this great and memorable  
“ epocha be that of the re-establishment of  
“ peace and union, and become the pledge  
“ of the happiness of the people, and of  
“ the prosperity of the Empire.”

The Hall for several minutes resounded with the cries of *Vive le Roi*, during which the Minister of Justice presented the Constitutional Act to the King to be signed, and signed it after his Majesty, as did all the other Ministers.

The Assembly, who had risen during the signing of the Constitutional Act, sat down again to hear the President's answer, who standing, pronounced the first sentence, but he also sat down with the most civic familiarity, when he saw that the King did not rise to hear him. The speech which he made to his Majesty was as follows:

“ France was oppressed by abuses which had long triumphed over the good inten-

the only person standing, sat down and continued his speech. This dignified motion was attended with a general clapping, mixed with cries of *Vive le Roi*. Even they who had just been insulting the Royal Majesty, seemed to be pleased with the King, for not having suffered it.

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tions of the best of Kings, and which would for ever have withstood the authority of the Throne.

“ The National Assembly, the depositary of the wishes, of the rights, and of the power of the People, have re-established, by the destruction of all abuses, the solid foundations of public prosperity. Sire, what this Assembly have decreed, the National adherence has ratified ; the most complete execution of it in every part of the Empire attests the general assent ; it disconcerts the feeble projects of those whom discontent has too long blinded to their own interests ; it promises your Majesty that you shall no longer wish in vain the happiness of the French.

“ The National Assembly have nothing more to desire on this ever memorable day, on which you have consummated in its bosom, by the most solemn engagement, the acceptance of the Constitutional Royalty. It is the attachment of the French, it is their confidence, which bestows upon you this respectable and pure title to the noblest Crown upon the globe ; and it is secured to you, Sire, by the imperishable authority of a Constitution freely decreed ; by the invincible



vincible force of a people who felt themselves worthy of liberty, and by the necessity there is, that so great a Nation should always have an hereditary Monarchy.

“ When your Majesty, waiting from experience a knowledge of the practical effects of the Constitution, promises *to maintain it at home, and to defend it against all attacks abroad*, the Nation relying upon the justice of their rights, upon the consciousness of their strength and courage, and upon the fidelity of their co-operation, cannot perceive abroad any ground of alarm, and will concur, by their tranquil confidence, to the prompt success of their Government at home.

“ How grand in our eyes, Sire! how dear to our hearts, and how sublime in our history must appear the æra of the regeneration, which gives to France Citizens, to the French a Country, and to you, as a King, a new title of grandeur and of glory, as a man, a new source of enjoyment, and new sensations of happiness.”

Nothing was heard in the Hall but clapping and cries of *Vive le Roi!* and *Bravo!* till the King had left it. The Assembly in a



body escorted the King back to the Palace, amidst the joyous shouts of the People, accompanied by military bands of music, and several volleys of artillery. During the remainder of the day the Palace and the garden of the Tuileries were filled with an immense concourse of citizens of all conditions. The King and Royal Family several times shewed themselves at the windows, to satisfy the eagerness of the People, who demonstrated their acknowledgment by the most animated shouts and clappings. In the evening all the streets of the Capital were illuminated, as they had been the night before. When the King accepted the Constitution, the Assembly had expressly declared, that the Revolution was at an end. The Parisians good-naturedly believed it; and the idea, that they were at last going to enter upon the enjoyment of all the prosperity, of all the happiness which had been promised them, transported them with joy.—The Assembly still further confirmed these flattering hopes, by decreeing, that the King should be requested to give orders, that the Constitution should be solemnly proclaimed in the Capital, on the Sunday following, September 18th, and in all the Departments and



and Municipalities of the Kingdom, on the Sunday after the day on which it should officially come to their hands ; and that the happy completion of it should be every where celebrated by public rejoicings, and by the liberation of all prisoners confined for debt contracted for the nursing of their children, which debts should be paid out of the Public Treasury.

The King's brothers, far from being imposed upon by these illusions, saw in the principles of the New Constitution, the annihilation of Religion, the overthrow of the Monarchy, and the violation of all Rights, and of all Property ; and in the consequences of those principles, the impunity for all crimes, the despotism of the brigands, and the total overthrow and desolation of the whole Kingdom. The King alone could have prevented so many calamities, by exercising freely, and conformably to the unanimous wish of the Nation, the right which they had formally acknowledged him to possess, in all their instructions to their Deputies, according to which no change could be made in the ancient Constitution, except in concert with his Majesty ;



jeſty; but at this fatal period, *Louis XVI*, violently ſtripped of all power, of every authority whatever, confined, he and his family, and watched in his Palace, was not ſo free as the loweſt of his ſubjects, and perceived that they ſtill acknowledged him as King, only by the insults and threats with which they addreſſed him every day, to ſhew their hatred to Royalty. The Princes, as much alarmed as irritated, at ſeeing the Royal Family in ſo critical a ſituation, ſtrenouſly exerted themſelves to intereſt all the Foreign Powers in their cauſe, and to prevail upon them to adopt the only determination that could deliver the King, ſave the Monarchy, and prevent the calamities with which the Revolution menaced not only France, but all Europe.

The Emperor and the King of Prussia, having at this period to ſettle between themſelves ſome intereſts of too delicate and important a nature to be adjusted by the uſual diplomatic modes, thought proper to diſcuſs them in perſon, and agreed for that purpoſe to meet at the Caſtle of Pilnitz, towards the end of the month of Auguſt, before the Emperor's coronation. Their  
Majeſties,



Majesties, being warmly urged by the Princes, consented to take also into consideration, in that conference, the subject of their representations, the result of which might have been so advantageous to the affairs of France, if the other Courts had been less tardy in adopting the Emperor's plan; and if he himself, yielding to the counsels of weakness, mistrust, or false politics, had not abandoned it, before he began to put it into execution. This plan agreed entirely with that which his Imperial Majesty had settled at Mantua four months before, except the changes made necessary by the difference of the King's situation at these junctures.

The Emperor and the King of Prussia arrived at Pilnitz on the 25th of August. His Royal Highness the Count *d'Artois* arrived there on the same day, accompanied by *M. de Calonne*, and immediately obtained an audience of their Majesties, which lasted about three quarters of an hour. It was agreed that the Baron *de Spielmann*, the Emperor's Minister, *M. de Bischofswerder*, the King of Prussia's, and *M. de Calonne*, for the Princes, should be commissioned to settle, and draw up a declaration, to be



signed by their Majesties. On the 27th, after dinner, while the Emperor, the King of Prussia, the Elector of Saxony, and the Count *d'Artois*, were gone to Dresden, the three Ministers met, and for nearly four hours discussed a plan of a declaration, which *M. Spielmann* had previously drawn up, and to which *M. de Calonne* made several objections. In the evening, after the return of their Majesties and the Count *d'Artois*, his Royal Highness and *M. de Calonne* went together to the Emperor's apartments, where they found the King of Prussia, Marshal *de Lacy*, *M. Spielmann*, and *M. Bischofswerder*. There was no other person present at this conference. The plan of a declaration was read and discussed. The contested points were again debated, and their Majesties consented, on being urged by the Count *d'Artois*, to admit the last sentence which *M. de Calonne* had proposed, as more adapted than the preceding ones to inspire confidence. It was also agreed by a secret Convention, that the Emperor and the King of Prussia, should each furnish twelve thousand men upon the frontiers of the Rhine, as soon as possible, to support the army of the Emigrants, and to demonstrate



strate unequivocally, the effectual protection which their Majesties were determined to grant to the cause of the Princes, while they waited the concurrence of the other Powers.

The declaration signed at Pilnitz by the Emperor and by the King of Prussia, and delivered by their Majesties to the Count *d'Artois*, was couched in these terms :

“ \* His Majesty the Emperor, and his  
“ Majesty the King of Prussia, having heard  
“ the desires and the representations of  
“ MONSIEUR and his Royal Highness the  
“ Count *d'Artois*, declare conjointly, that  
“ they consider the situation in which his

\* The Factious who were not in the secret of the general plan with which this declaration was connected, concluded, from the words *then and in that case*, with which the last sentence but one of this declaration began, that it was an illusory and unmeaning act, granted to the Princes, without any intention of its being put in execution, and merely to get rid of their importunities. In fact, it is certain, that the declaration of Pilnitz was not executed ; but that was only because the pure and unconditional acceptance of the Constitutional Act, which had not been expected, was made by the King, in terms that gave grounds for presuming that his Majesty had sincerely and voluntarily consented to make trial of the New Constitution.



“ Majesty the King of France is at present  
“ placed, as a matter which concerns the  
“ interest of every Sovereign of Europe.—  
“ They hope that that interest will not fail  
“ to be acknowledged by the Powers whose  
“ assistance is required; and that conse-  
“ quently, they will not refuse to employ,  
“ in conjunction with their Majesties, the  
“ most efficacious means, according to their  
“ abilities, to put the King of France in a  
“ situation to establish, in perfect liberty,  
“ the foundations of a Monarchical Go-  
“ vernment, equally agreeable to the rights  
“ of Sovereigns and the welfare of the  
“ French; then and in that case, their Ma-  
“ jesties are determined to act promptly and  
“ by mutual consent, with the forces ne-  
“ cessary to obtain the end proposed by all  
“ of them. In the mean time they will  
“ give orders for their troops to be ready  
“ for actual service.

“ *Pilnitz, August 27th, 1791.*

“ Signed by the Emperor and the King  
“ of Prussia.”

As the Princes at this time had no means  
of corresponding directly with the King,  
without running the risk of augmenting his  
dangers,



dangers, they could not inform him of this negotiation, and the mode they took to make the result of it known to him, was by a letter they caused to be inserted in several newspapers and journals \*. This letter made a great impresson, but unfortunately the King had accepted the Constitution before that letter was published. Not that I am of opinion, that the counsels, the promises, and the hopes, which the Princes gave his Majesty, would ever have prevailed upon him to refuse entirely his acceptance of the Constitutional Act. The certainty of the dangers which so energetic a determination would have raised, must always have been enough to divert the King from it ; but it was more than probable, that if the letter of the Princes, and the declaration signed at Pilnitz, had been known before the Constitutional Act had been presented to his Majesty, the Assembly might not have insisted so imperiously on the pretended necessity of a pure and unconditional acceptance, and might have thought themselves happy, if they had obtained a provisional one, founded upon motives drawn even from

\* See Appendix, No. xxiii.



the King's situation, and conformable to his real sentiments, and not upon comments, of which the confusion, contradictions, style, and want of dignity, clearly showed, that the letter which contained them, and which the King had thought himself obliged to sign, was no less foreign to his heart than that which was sent to the Ambassadors some months before, under the name of *M. de Montmorin*. Those two Constitutional papers were in reality the productions of the same faction.

The proclamation of the Constitutional Act was made at Paris on Sunday the 18th of September, with great solemnity. The commencement of the ceremony was announced by several discharges of artillery.—The Mayor set out from the *Hotel-de-Ville*, at eight o'clock in the morning, accompanied by the Municipal Body ; a numerous detachment of the National Guard on foot and on horseback ; heralds, in their full dresses, and a band of musicians. After making the proclamation on the steps of the *Hotel-de-Ville*, at the *Caroussel*, and at the *Place-Vendome*, the procession went to the *Champ-de-Mars*, where the six divisions of the National Guard, the members of the Tribunals,



Tribunals, the Department, the Committees of the forty-eight Sections, and the Justices of Peace, were previously assembled. The Mayor placed himself upon the Altar of the Country, and at the same time there was a discharge of 130 pieces of cannon. He then proclaimed the Constitutional Act, amidst the clapping of the spectators, and cries, a thousand times repeated, of—*Vive la Nation!*

At five o'clock in the afternoon, a baloon loaded with Constitutional emblems, rose majestically from the middle of the *Champs-Elisées*, and passed directly over the town. At night the illuminations were general; those of the public buildings and walks, afforded a most magnificent spectacle. The outer walks on each side of the *Champs-Elisées* were ornamented with festoons of small lamps, hung from tree to tree, from the *Place Louis XV.* to *l'Etoile*. The inner parts of these fields were also illuminated, and at certain distances were seen amphitheatres filled with musicians. *M. de la Fayette* made his appearance at ten o'clock at night, accompanied by his Aide-de-Camps, gathering the popular homage which the sincerity  
of



of his devotion to the New Constitution merited. The King, the Queen, the Dauphin, and Madame Royale, arrived some moments after *M. de la Fayette*. Their carriage was soon surrounded by an immense concourse of spectators of all classes, and the *Champs-Elisées* rung for nearly a quarter of an hour with the shouts of *Vive le Roi!* sometimes mingled with those of *Vive la Reine!* *Vive la Nation!* *Vive la Liberté!* *Vive la Fayette!*

Among those who cried *Vive le Roi!* several were seen endeavouring to conceal their tears, and their countenances expressed a melancholy foreboding: in general, among the People, that lively and free gaiety by which they usually displayed their content, was not to be found; the musicians in vain played the patriotic airs most adapted to inspire the song and dance; nobody sung, nobody had a desire to dance. The People did nothing but run from one public edifice to another, to see illuminations, and they mistook for joy what in reality was foolery. In fact, what was there in this Constitutional Act, proclaimed with so much magnificence, to delight the People of the Capital? They  
had



had never been subject to tithes or feudal services, and of course, their suppression was a matter of indifference as it regarded them. The metaphysical declaration of the Rights of Man and of a Citizen, the distinction of three powers, with their respective attributes, &c. &c. were to them words without ideas. What could they make, even of the dogmas of the sovereignty of the People and political Liberty, after they had been fired upon in the affair of the *Champ-de-Mars*? For two years they had been made to sing *ça ira, ça ira*; but every thing went from bad to worse, and the time when the Assembly concluded this fatal Constitution, without permitting the King to propose any alteration in it, was a period of disorder and anarchy throughout the Kingdom, notwithstanding the effrontery with which the President (*Thouret*) had asserted, in his answer to the King, *that the most complete execution of the Constitutional Decrees in every part of the Empire, attested the general assent.*

Where then was that pretended complete execution to be found? Was it at Toulon, in the midst of the dead and wounded, who had been fired at before the eyes of the Directory



rectory and Municipality? Was it at Marfeilles, where two gentlemen had been massacred with impunity, under the common pretext of aristocracy? Was it at Arles, which was in a state of insurrection, and upon the point of being besieged? Was it at Bayeux, where the Abbé *Fauchet*, the Constitutional Bishop, decreed to be arrested and prosecuted, even by order of the National Assembly, had received triumphal honours, and was deputed to the next Legislature? Was it at Blois, where the Commandant, devoted to death, for attempting to execute the Decrees, had been compelled to send away a faithful regiment, and submit to a revolted battalion which was protected by the Club, the Municipality, and the National Guard? Was it at Nismes, where the regiment of Dauphiné, when quitting the city by order of the Minister, had been detained in it by order of the People, and of the *friends of the Constitution*, who some months before had assisted them to get rid of their Officers? Was it at Toulouse where, in spite of the decrees, the Administrative Bodies had ordered all the priests, who had not taken the oath, to leave the city in three days, and to remove to four leagues distance from



from it? Finally, was it in the payment of the taxes; in respect for property; in the payment of the manerial rents not suppressed; in the toleration of the Roman Catholics; in the return of public and private safety; in the energy of the police; in the independence of the courts of justice; in the subordination of the army; in the liberty of opinions; in submission to the legal power of the Departments and Municipalities; in obedience to the secondary constituted authorities, or to the chief of the Executive Power, &c.?

These doubtless are circumstances which ought to have existed, to justify the assertion of the President, and to manifest the advantages of the New Constitution; but the contrary every where was the case at that very moment, and consequently the President was an impostor, and the Constitution but a code of insurrection and anarchy.

Such was the state of France, when it pleased the Assembly to see in the King's acceptance of the Constitutional Act, the period of the Constituent Power which they had arrogated to themselves. They therefore modestly resumed their functions purely legislative, and occupied themselves in  
expe.



expediting the different reports with which their Committees were charged. They finally fixed the 30th of September as the day of their dissolution, and decreed the suppression of the High National Court provisionally established at Orleans, now rendered useless by the amnesty granted for all offences relative to the Revolution, the crime of having protested against it being the only one regarded as unpardonable, and the Assembly decreed, upon the motion of *Adrien Duport*, “ That all persons  
“ who had signed any papers, whose object  
“ was to declare, that the Constitution accept-  
“ ed by the King ought not to be regarded as  
“ the law of the Kingdom, and binding upon  
“ every Frenchman, should be incapable  
“ of holding any office civil or military,  
“ and if employed, should be dismissed,  
“ unless they retracted the said declarations  
“ within a month, and took the civic  
“ oath.”

The decrees without number, which were made during the last Sitzings, were almost all of them adopted without discussion \*, and upon the bare proposal of the reporter.

\* I shall content myself with citing, among the most  
re-



reporter. The only ones which gave place to some debates were ; 1st, That by which the Assembly again seizing the Constituent Power, but only in respect to the Colonies, decreed, upon the report of *Barnave*, that their Exterior Government should be exclusively regulated by the Legislative Assembly, with the King's sanction, and that the laws concerning the situation of persons not free, and the political situation of people of colour, and free negroes, as well as the regulations relative to the execution of the said laws, should be made by the Colonial Assemblies, executed provisionally with the approbation of the Governors, and sent to receive the King's sanction, all anterior Decrees notwithstanding, &c. &c. September 24th.

2dly, The Decree by which the Assembly, acknowledged the immense services which

remarkable, that which concerned the police and justice, in the ports and arsenals ; that which organized the Comtat of Avignon ; that relating to the Notaries of Paris, and to the reimbursement of all the Royal Notaries ; that which admitted the Jews to all the rights of an active citizen, on condition of taking the civic oaths and a great many of the articles of the penal code.



the Clubs had rendered to the Revolution but considering the dangers of their undue popularity ; of their affiliations ; of their correspondence ; of their journals ; of the exaggerations of their zeal, &c. &c. divested them of all political existence, forbade them all interference whatever, whether by action or inspection, with the acts of the Constituted Powers and the legal authorities, and decreed, that they should not under any pretext, assume a collective name, either to form petitions or deputations, in attending public ceremonies, or for any other object, under pain of being prosecuted by the *Procureurs-Generaux-Syndics* of the Departments, of being condemned by the tribunals to be struck out for two years from the civic list, and of being declared incapable of exercising any public office during that time.

*Robespierre*, shocked at the *perfidy*, *ingratitude*, and *machiavelism* of this Decree, shouted, and the patriots of the Galleries partook his indignation as violently as he could desire. So serious a blow aimed at the high power, which awaited him in the Jacobin Club, and which was so amply to compensate the cessation of his Legislative and Constitutional functions, was in his eyes



eyes a manifest violation of the Constitution; a horrid infringement of Liberty; of the Sovereignty of the People; the idea of breaking so precious, so necessary an instrument as the Popular Societies had been, and still were, could only have been conceived by an enemy to the Country; and the calumnies which were lavished on them, were the petty means commonly used by noted petty spirits, who were at once the disgrace and scourge of Revolutions. Notwithstanding these declamations and abuses, the Assembly, by a great majority, adopted the Decree proposed by the Committee.

The order of the day to discuss the famous report concerning the public and National education, drawn up in the name of the Committee of the Constitution, by the late Bishop of *Autun* was not attended to. As the most rapid examination of so voluminous a plan, would take up many more Sitzings than there remained for the Assembly to devote to it, they resolved to leave it for the succeeding Legislature, notwithstanding the representations of the author, and the reductions to which he consented. From this plan were afterwards formed the Na-



tional Institute, the Primary Schools, the Schools of the District, the Central, Special, and Normal Schools, and all that Revolutionary nomenclature, by means of which miserable schools of irreligion and Jacobinism have been substituted for good colleges.

The Assembly were approaching the moment of their dissolution, and for some days the Capital and the Provinces were overwhelmed with pamphlets and placards, in which they were called upon, in a very high tone, to give in their accounts. They could not certainly be called upon for an account of cash, as they had not had the management of the Treasury, but as, since Mr. *Necker's* retreat, they had made themselves masters of the whole Administration of the Finances, they could be called upon, like other Officers of Government, for an account of their Administration. Although they were exempt from responsibility in the exercise of the Legislative Power, they could not, without an extreme absurdity unknown among civilized Nations, pretend to the same prerogative in those cases in which they had interfered with, and taking upon them  
the



the functions of either the Executive or Ministerial Power. What security in fact could there be for the public monies, or for private fortune, in a State in which Representatives of the Nation, assembled as a Legislative Body, should be authorised by that title to establish what taxes they judged proper, and expend the produce of them at their pleasure, without being subject to any responsibility or account? At least then, it was the duty of the Assembly to present the Nation with an authentic and comparative statement of the condition in which they had found the Finances, and that in which they left them; and such was the object of the motion made by the Abbé *Maury* in the Sitting of the 28th of September, which the members of the *Coté-Droit* had attended in very great numbers to support. He moved for the execution of the Decree of the 14th of February preceding, enacting, that the Assembly should not separate till they had delivered in their accounts. He offered to prove, that the account which *M. de Montesquiou* had read some days before, as his own private performance, which was not avowed by the



Committee of Finances, and not discussed by the Assembly, was but a fabrication, a tissue of impostures\*, and could not consequently discharge the engagement into which the Assembly had entered.

This motion created a dreadful tumult.— The Abbé *Maury* was interrupted at almost every word, by cries of, *To the order of the day! Hold your tongue! Down, down!*

\* A writer equally estimable for his talents and his opinions (*M. Bergasse*) published some preliminary observations on the pretended account read to the Assembly by *M. de Montesquiou*, and removed in this first sketch some serious errors. He proved, for example, that *M. Amelot*, and the Committee of Alienation had stated only at 2,452,227,758 livres, the estimate of the National property sold and to be sold, including the woods and forests declared unalienable; and that in September, *M. de Montesquiou* stated the value of the same property at 2,900,080,082 livres without including the woods and forests, with which, according to his statement, they formed a capital of three thousand three hundred millions; from which there appeared a difference of eight hundred and forty-eight millions between the two accounts. He proved as clearly an error of more than a thousand millions exaggerated upon six articles of extraordinary receipts; he announced at the same time, that still stranger consequences were to be expected, when he discussed *M. de Montesquiou's* account more minutely.

*Get*



*Get out of the Tribune! To the Abbaye!* The grossest invectives were poured forth upon him, as well as upon the members of the *Coté-Droit*, who supported his motion, and were continually repeating *deliver in your accounts!* *Adrien Duport* maintained, in a long speech, which was often interrupted by the murmurs of the *Coté-Droit*, that, as the Assembly had not the management of the monies, they were not liable to account.—

“ The expences, of whatever nature they  
“ were,” said he, “ have been regulated by  
“ Decrees, and the application of the dif-  
“ ferent sums has been also made by De-  
“ crees. This is the only share which the  
“ National Assembly have taken in this  
“ essential part of the Administration.”

Was not this confession the plainest acknowledgement possible, that the Administration of the Finances had been entirely and exclusively exercised by the Assembly, and that consequently, it was only from them that accounts relative to that Administration could be demanded, except such as the Cashier and Commissioners of the Treasury were bound to render? However, after a long and indecent debate, the motion of the Abbé *Maury*, being considered as Coun-



ter-Revolutionary, was rejected for the order of the day.

In fact, it is more than probable, that if these accounts had been accurately stated, the Nation, seeing that the Assembly, instead of covering, as they ought and could so easily, the old *deficit* of the Finances, had enormously increased it by squandering and speculation, would have been exasperated at their Representatives, for the abuse of their powers, would at last have had their eyes opened to their quackery and ignorance, would have detested their work, and abjured their extravagant Constitution, which violated or endangered all rights and all property, and left the creditors of the State no other security than a fine phrase \*, and thousands of millions of Assignats, the mortgage for which was daily consumed by the Revolution. The Abbé Maury's motion, viewed in this light, must doubtless appear very Counter-Revolutionary.

A *Te Deum* however was chanted, with the greatest solemnity, on Sunday the 25th

\* We may remember that the Order of the *Tiers*, having constituted themselves into a National Assembly, in the Tennis-Court at Versailles, gave the creditors of the State the *safeguard of the French probity*.



of September, in the church of *Notre-Dame*, as a thanksgiving for the finishing and acceptance of this Constitution. On the same day the King, wishing to give a new opportunity to public rejoicing, caused the Tuileries and the *Champs-Elisées*, to be illuminated at his own expence, with still greater magnificence and taste than they had been the preceding Sunday. His Majesty, when he announced this intention to the Mayor of Paris, sent him from himself and the Queen, 50,000 livres, to be distributed among the poor of the Capital. The King was determined not to confine himself to actions of which the sincerity might be suspected. Religiously faithful to his oath, he as sincerely set about the means of causing the Constitutional Act to be executed, as if he had accepted it most freely. His Majesty made known his sentiment in this respect by a proclamation, in which he addressed the Constituted Authorities, the National Guard, and the Citizens of every class and party, with invitations and counsels, replete with wisdom, tending to inspire dispositions most favourable to the establishment and trial of the new system.

At



At length the last Sitting of this Assembly, which had now existed two years and four months, opened on the 30th of September. The Assembly being informed on the evening before, that the King would come to close the Sessions, thought it necessary to regulate finally the ceremonial to be observed in future by the Legislative Body, in regard to his Majesty, and in consequence decreed :—

1st, That when the King entered the Hall of the Legislative Body, the Assembly should receive him standing, and that they should be seated and covered, when the King was seated and covered.

2dly, That the King should have a chair wrought with *fleurs-de-lis*, placed in the middle of the raised floor; that the Ministers should be behind him, and that the President should be on his right, and keep his usual chair.

3dly, That no person should address the King, without being authorised by an express Decree of the Assembly previously passed.

While they were waiting the arrival of his Majesty, the Department and Municipality



pality of Paris, came to congratulate the Assembly upon *the happy conclusion of their labours*. The fate which has attended the Constitution of 1791, renders the predictions and eulogiums addressed to its authors by the speakers of the two Deputations very remarkable.

“ Gentlemen,” said *M. Bailly*, “ the City of Paris comes for the last time to offer its homage to the first Representatives of a powerful and free Nation. You have been invested with the greatest power that can be bestowed on men. You have ruled the destiny of all the French ; and this day your power expires. But another day, and you will be no more. You will be regretted disinterestedly ; you will be praised without flattery, not by us our children, your good deeds must praise you. How many memorable days do you leave for the reflection of men ! What days were those in which you constituted the first Representation of the French Nation, in which you swore before-hand to the Constitution, while it was yet in the womb of time, and in your genius ! Legislators of France, we announce to you the blessings of posterity, which  
com-



commence from this day. You will, in the ideas of men, be joined and mixed with the legislators of Nations, who have founded the happiness of their country, and merited the veneration of ages. Our regret will follow you as well as our admiration and our respect."

The speaker of the Department (*Pastoret*) carried the hyperbole, imposture and delirium still farther. "Liberty," said he, "had fled beyond the seas, or had hidden herself in the mountains. You have raised her Throne again among us. Despotism had effaced all the pages of the book of Nature; you have restored to it that immortal declaration—that decalogue of Freemen\*. Protection was for the rich, yet the taxes which was the price of protection, was only paid by the poor. They were even sometimes doubled upon them, as if the earth had produced two harvests†. You have avenged them for this long injustice. Equality was so altered, that even the defence of

\* This fine *decalogue* contains seventeen articles.

† This is a gross calumny. Never did such abuses exist in France.



the country was considered as a privilege; now every citizen has become a soldier.

“ You have rendered the Ministry of the Altar more venerable, after it had been degraded, sometimes by the indigence of the pastors, and sometimes by the riches of the pontiffs. Not satisfied with establishing the noblest Constitution in the world, you have given yourselves up to such labours upon the laws, that they who aspire to the glory of one day imitating you, have perhaps at times said, in the jealous transport of an honourable ambition, what *Alexander* said of *Philip*: *he will leave me nothing to conquer.*

“ More than one Nation begin to arouse from slavery. Every where will be felt this great truth, revealed by philosophy, that the strength of Tyrants consists entirely in the patience of the People.”

At three o'clock, the King, accompanied by the Ministers, entered the Assembly. The Hall rang with clapping, and cries of *Vive le Roi!* which were repeated with transports at every sentence of his Majesty's speech, which was as follows:

“ GEN-



“ GENTLEMEN,

“ After finishing the Constitution, you have determined that this day shall end your labours. Perhaps it might have been desirable that this Session should have continued for some time longer, that you might yourselves have tried your work, and added to your labours, those, which being already prepared, only want to be perfected, and all those, the necessity of which might have struck legislators enlightened by an experience of almost three years ; but you have doubtless thought it of importance to make the interval between the finishing of the Constitution, and the end of the labours of the Constituent Body, as short as possible, in order to mark with more precision by the contrast, the difference there is between the functions of the Constituent Body and the duties of Legislatures.

“ Having accepted the Constitution, which you have given to the Kingdom, I will employ all the strength and means I have received from it, to secure to the laws the respect and obedience which are due to them. I have made known to the Foreign Powers my acceptance of the Constitution ;  
and



and my mind is, and ever will be, bent on the measures which may secure abroad the safety and tranquillity of the Kingdom. I will not be less vigilant and firm in causing the Constitution to be executed at home, and in preventing it from being altered.

“ For you, Gentlemen, who in a long and painful career, have shewn an indefatigable zeal in your labours, there still remains a duty to fulfill, when you are dispersed over the surface of this Empire; that is, to teach your fellow citizens the true spirit of the laws which you have made for them; to set those right who misconceive them; to purify and unite all opinions, by the example you will set of the love of order, and submission to the laws. Gentlemen, when you are returned to your respective homes, I depend upon your being the interpreters of my sentiments to your fellow citizens. Tell them all, that the King will ever be their first and most faithful friend; that he requires their love; and that he cannot be happy but with them and for them. The hope of contributing to their happiness will sustain my courage, as the satisfaction of succeeding in it will be my sweetest recompence.”



After the acclamations and repeated clapping, which followed the King's speech, the President made the following answer to his Majesty :

“ SIRE,

“ The National Assembly having attained the period of their career, enjoy at this moment the first fruits of their labours.

“ Convinced that the Government most congenial to France is that which reconciles the respectable prerogative of the Throne with the unalienable rights of the People, they have given the State a Constitution, which equally secures Royalty and the National Liberty.

“ The fate of France depends upon the speedy confirmation of that Constitution ; and all the means that can ensure its success, conspire to accelerate it.

“ Soon, Sire, shall the civic wish which your Majesty has just expressed, be accomplished ; soon returned to our homes, shall we give examples of obedience to the laws, after having made them, and teach that there can be no liberty, but in respecting the Constituted Authorities.

“ Our successors, charged with the awful  
deposit



deposit of the safety of the Empire, will neither misconceive the object of their high mission, nor its Constitutional limits; nor the means of performing it well. They are and they will always shew themselves worthy of the confidence which has placed the fate of the Nation in their hands.

“ And you, Sire, have already done nearly every thing. Your Majesty has put an end to the Revolution, by so sincere and frank an acceptance of the Constitution.— You have discouraged our enemies abroad; restored confidence at home; re-established the master-spring of Government, and prepared a useful vigour for the Administration.

“ Your heart, Sire, has already received the reward of it; it has enjoyed the affecting sight of the public joy, and the ardent testimonies of the gratitude and love of the French. These sentiments, necessary to the happiness of good Kings, are due to you, Sire! They will ever be yours; and their energy will increase, in proportion as the Nation shall enjoy the constant efforts of your Majesty, to secure the common happiness, by the maintenance of the Constitution.”



Fresh clapping, still mixed with cries of *Vive le Roi!* attended his Majesty, when he left the Assembly.

*Target* then read the minute of this Sitting. As soon as the reading was over, the President rose, and pronounced these words in the most solemn tone: "The Constituent  
" National Assembly declare, that their mis-  
" sion is finished, and that they terminate  
" their Sitzings at this moment."

At leaving the Hall, some hundreds of women, children, and the patriots of the Galleries, surrounded *Petion* and *Robespierre*, and overwhelmed them with caresses and homage. Civic Crowns were placed upon their head; the populace unharnessed their horses, and wanted to draw their carriages, but they had the modesty to refuse this excess of honour. During this scene, some of the principal members of the Constitutional Party, formerly objects of this popular idolatry, were hissed, hooted, and insulted by the multitude.

Thus terminated this guilty Assembly, whose vanity, ambition, cupidity, ingratitude, ignorance, and audacity, have overturned the most ancient and noblest Monarchy of Europe, and rendered France the



Theatre of every crime, of every calamity, and of the most horrible catastrophes. Can these treacherous Representatives ever justify themselves in the eyes of the Nation, for having so unworthily abused their confidence and their powers ?

The subsequent events of the reign of *Louis XVI.* took place after my nomination to the Ministry, and are related very circumstantially in the PRIVATE MEMOIRS which I have already published.

THE END.



A few remaining Copies of the following Work by the  
same Author, may be had of Messrs. CADELL and  
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# A P P E N D I X.

[ N<sup>o</sup> 1. ]

*Récit fait, le 16 Juillet 1789, à l'Assemblée Nationale, par M. MOUNIER, membre de la députation qu'elle avoit envoyée à Paris le jour précédent.*

MESSIEURS, les commissaires nommés par l'Assemblée Nationale, pour contribuer au rétablissement du calme dans la ville de Paris, sont partis hier de Versailles, à trois heures après midi. Dans le lieu même de leur départ, les acclamations, les applaudissemens commencèrent, et dès ce moment ils ne cessèrent plus.

Pendant toute la route, le peuple se rendoit en foule sur leur passage, les combloit de bénédictions, et se livroit à tous les transports de la plus vive allégresse. Les militaires partageoient les mêmes sentimens. Officiers et soldats, étrangers et françois, tous paroissoient animés du même esprit. Tous les regards exprimoient l'attendrissement, toutes les bouches, le patriotisme et l'humanité. Nous marchions au milieu d'une foule



immense, mais nous ne pouvions y avoir que des amis et des frères.

Entrés dans Paris, une brigade de maréchaussée, des gardes de la prévôté et un trompette qui nous avoient joints sur la route, marchaient devant nous, et annonçoient l'arrivée des députés. Des bourgeois armés, mêlés avec des soldats, nous environnoient pour former notre cortège.

Arrivés à la place Louis XV, nous descendons de nos voitures. Une garde nombreuse nous escorte : un peuple innombrable s'offre de tous côtés à nos regards. Les bourgeois et les soldats armés, sont rangés en haie sur notre passage. Les spectateurs tâchent de donner essor au sentiment qui les oppresse, par tous les signes de la plus vive affection. C'est pour eux une vive jouissance que de serrer les mains d'un des membres de l'Assemblée Nationale. L'air est incessamment frappé des applaudissemens, des cris de joie, auxquels se joint le bruit des tambours et des instrumens de musique. Les citoyens se félicitent, s'embrassent réciproquement. Tous les yeux sont mouillés de larmes ; par tout se montre l'ivresse du sentiment. De toutes parts on s'écrie, *vive le Roi, vive la Nation, vive les Députés !*

Jamais fête publique ne fut aussi belle, aussi touchante ; jamais on ne vit des milliers de citoyens se presser ainsi sur les pas de leurs représentans, pour contempler dans cette marche auguste et solennelle, l'image de la liberté. L'his-



toire n'offre point de pareil exemple, l'histoire ne parviendra jamais à retracer ce que nous avons vu, et sur-tout ce que nous avons senti.

Arrivés à l'Hôtel-de-Ville, quel beau spectacle se présente ! La place est couverte d'une foule prodigieuse de citoyens armés et non armés. Les mêmes acclamations que nous avions entendues sur notre passage, sont sans cesse répétées. Entrés dans la salle principale, la foule est si nombreuse, elle est si transportée de joie, que le silence s'obtient avec peine. Enfin, M. le marquis de la Fayette annonce que le Roi est venu au milieu de l'Assemblée Nationale, sans pompe, sans appareil. Il leur fait lecture du discours que le Roi a prononcé ; il leur rappelle les témoignages d'amour et de sensibilité donnés au monarque par les représentans de la Nation, et ce beau moment où Sa Majesté est retournée à pied au château, au milieu de l'Assemblée Nationale et des habitans de Versailles, gardé par leur amour et leur inviolable fidélité.

On répond par de nombreux applaudissemens et des cris de *vive le Roi !* Ensuite, M. le comte de Lally-Tollendal prend la parole. Après avoir donné au patriotisme, à la fermeté des Parisiens, un juste tribut d'éloges ; après avoir exprimé la douleur qu'avoient éprouvé les représentans de la Nation, en apprenant les malheurs de la Capitale ; après avoir décrit les scènes touchantes de Versailles, il parle de la liberté et de la patrie ; il parle



du Roi, de ses vertus, des devoirs des François, avec un ton si noble, si propre à émouvoir, avec une éloquence si persuasive, que la foule des auditeurs est entraînée, que l'ivresse est au comble. L'amour de la patrie, l'amour du Roi exaltent toutes les ames. L'orateur est pressé dans les bras de ceux qui l'entourent: une couronne de fleurs lui est offerte; sa modestie la repousse; il en fait hommage à l'Assemblée Nationale. Malgré ses efforts, elle est placée sur sa tête. On veut ensuite le présenter au peuple assemblé sur la place. Il résiste en vain; il est porté vers une fenêtre, d'où il reçoit les applaudissemens du peuple.

Après le discours de M. de Lally-Tollendal, Mgr. l'Archevêque de Paris a fait de nouvelles exhortations pour le rétablissement de la paix, et proposé de se rendre à l'église de Notre-Dame pour offrir à Dieu des actions de grâces.

Le président de l'assemblée des Electeurs a prononcé un discours qui respiroit le zèle et le patriotisme. Il a exhorté le peuple à oublier tout ressentiment, et il en a reçu la promesse.

M. le duc de Liancour a annoncé que Sa Majesté autorisoit le rétablissement de la milice bourgeoise.

M. le comte de Clermont-Tonnerre a parlé ensuite avec beaucoup de succès; il a été fort applaudi.

On a déclaré à M. le marquis de la Fayette



qu'il étoit nommé Commandant général de la milice Parisienne.

Le grand nombre de citoyens qui remplissoient la salle de l'Hôtel-de-Ville, conjuroit les commissaires, par les plus vives, les plus pressantes instances, de demander le retour de M. Necker. Ils ont exprimé le vœu de voir confier à M. Bailly la place de Maire de la Ville. Cet excellent citoyen, ainsi que Mgr. l'Archevêque de Paris, ont reçu des témoignages bien flatteurs et bien mérités de l'affection et de l'estime des Parisiens.

Les commissaires de l'Assemblée Nationale se sont mis ensuite en marche pour l'Eglise de Notre-Dame dans le même ordre. On a chanté le *Te Deum*, et on a fait prêter serment à M. de la Fayette de remplir fidèlement les fonctions de général. Le serment a été prêté au bruit du canon, des tambours et d'une musique militaire.

Après le *Te Deum*, les commissaires se sont rendus chez Mgr. l'Archevêque. A mesure qu'ils sortoient de l'Archevêché, ils étoient conduits par une garde bourgeoise au lieu de leur départ, et recevoient sur leur passage les honneurs militaires, au milieu des acclamations des citoyens.

Je dois ajouter que, dans toutes les rues de Paris comme dans la salle de l'Hôtel-de-Ville, on demandoit à grands cris l'éloignement des nouveaux ministres, et le retour de M. Necker. Les habitans de Paris envioient le bonheur dont avoit joui l'Assemblée Nationale, et témoignaient le



désir de voir leur monarque au milieu d'eux, comme nous l'avions eu au milieu de nous.

Ainsi Paris va jouir des douceurs de la paix. La milice bourgeoise préviendra tous les désordres : elle sera commandée par un héros dont le nom est cher à la liberté dans les deux mondes, mais par un héros françois qui sait tout à la fois aimer son prince et abhorrer l'esclavage.

Nous devons des regrets sans doute à tous les maux que la Capitale a soufferts. Puisse-t-elle ne jamais revoir les terribles momens où la loi n'a plus d'empire ; mais puisse-t-elle ne plus éprouver le joug du despotisme ! Elle est digne de la liberté ; elle la mérite par son courage et son énergie.

A qui peut-on reprocher le sang répandu ? N'est-ce pas aux perfides conseillers qui ont pu surprendre la religion du Roi, jusqu'au point de faire interdire par des soldats, aux représentans de la Nation l'entrée du lieu ordinaire de leurs séances, de transformer l'Assemblée Nationale en un lit de justice ; de rassembler ensuite à grands frais une armée, dans un moment où les finances sont dans le plus grand désordre, où l'on éprouve une affreuse disette ; de porter cette armée à Paris, à Versailles et dans les environs, d'alarmer ainsi le peuple sur la sûreté personnelle de ses représentans ; de placer l'appareil de la guerre auprès du sanctuaire de la liberté et d'éloigner des ministres vertueux qui jouissoient de la con-



fiance publique ; d'intercepter le passage sur les routes de Paris à Versailles, et de traiter les sujets du Roi comme les ennemis de l'État.

Sans doute, il n'est aucun de nous qui n'eût désiré de prévenir, par tous les moyens possibles les troubles de Paris ; mais les ennemis de la Nation n'ont pas craint de les faire naître. Ces troubles vont cesser ; la constitution sera établie ; elle nous consolera, elle consolera les Parisiens de tous les malheurs précédens ; et parmi les actes du désespoir du peuple, en pleurant sur la mort de plusieurs citoyens, il sera peut-être difficile de résister à un sentiment de satisfaction, en voyant la destruction de la Bastille, où, sur les ruines de cette horrible prison du despotisme, s'élèvera bientôt, suivant le vœu des citoyens de Paris la statue d'un bon Roi, restorateur de la liberté et du bonheur de la France.

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 2. ]

*Lettre du Président de l'Assemblée Nationale à  
Mr. Necker.*

A Versailles, le 16 Juillet 1789.

L'Assemblée Nationale, Monsieur, avoit déjà consigné dans un acte solennel, que vous emportiez son estime et ses regrets ; cet honorable témoignage vous a été adressé de sa part et vous devez l'avoir reçu.



Ce matin elle avoit arrêté que le Roi seroit supplié de vous rappeler au ministère. C'étoit tout-à-la-fois son vœu qu'elle exprimoit et celui de la capitale qui vous réclamoit à grands cris.

Le Roi a daigné prévenir notre demande, votre rappel nous a été annoncé de sa part, la reconnaissance nous a aussitôt conduits vers Sa Majesté, et elle nous a donné une nouvelle marque de confiance en nous remettant la lettre qu'elle vous avoit écrite et en nous chargeant de vous l'adresser.

L'Assemblée Nationale, Monsieur, vous presse de vous rendre au désir de Sa Majesté, vos talens et vos vertus ne pouvoient recevoir ni une récompense plus glorieuse, ni un plus puissant encouragement.

Vous justifierez notre confiance, vous ne préférerez pas votre propre tranquillité à la tranquillité publique.

Vous ne vous refuserez pas aux intentions bienfaisantes de Sa Majesté pour ses peuples, tous les momens sont précieux. La Nation, son Roi et ses représentans vous attendent.

*Signés,* JEAN-GEORGE, Archevêque de Vienne, président, le comte DE LALLY-TOLLENDAL, MOUNIER, *Secrétaires.*



[ N<sup>o</sup>. 2. ] (bis.)*Lettre du Roi, à Mr. Necker.*

Versailles, 16 Juillet 1789.

Je vous avois écrit, Monsieur, que dans un tems plus calme je vous donneroïis des preuves de mes sentimens ; mais cependant le désir que les États-Généraux, et la ville de Paris témoignent, m'engage à hâter le moment de votre retour. Je vous invite donc à revenir le plutôt possible reprendre auprès de moi votre place. Vous m'avez parlé en me quittant de votre attachement ; la preuve que j'en demande est la plus grande que vous puissiez me donner dans cette circonstance.

*Signé LOUIS.*[ N<sup>o</sup>. 3. ]*Réponse de Mr. Necker au Roi.*

SIRE,

Je touchois au port que tant d'agitations me faisoient désirer, lorsque j'ai reçu la lettre dont Votre Majesté m'a honoré. Je vais retourner auprès d'elle pour recevoir ses ordres, et juger de plus près, si en effet mon zèle infatigable et mon dévouement sans réserve, peuvent encore servir à Votre Majesté. Je crois qu'elle me dé-



sire, puisqu'elle daigne m'en assurer, et que sa bonne foi m'est connue. Mais je la supplie aussi de croire sur ma parole que tout ce qui séduit la plupart des hommes élevés aux grandes places, n'a plus de charme pour moi, et que sans un sentiment de vertu digne de l'estime du Roi, c'est dans la retraite seule que j'aurois nourri l'amour et l'intérêt dont je ne cesserai d'être pénétré pour la gloire et le bonheur de Sa Majesté.

Je suis avec le plus profond respect, &c. &c.

*Signé* NECKER.

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 3. ] (*bis.*)

*Réponse de Mr. Necker à l'Assemblée.*

MESSIEURS,

Sensiblement ému par de longues agitations et considérant déjà de près le moment où il est tems de songer à la retraite du monde et des affaires, je me préparois à ne plus suivre que de mes vœux ardents le destin de la France et le bonheur d'une Nation à laquelle je suis attaché par tant de liens, lorsque j'ai reçu la lettre dont vous m'avez honoré. Il est hors de mon pouvoir, il est au-dessus de mes foibles moyens de répondre dignement à cette marque si précieuse de votre estime et de votre bienveillance; mais je dois au moins, Messieurs, vous aller porter



l'hommage de ma respectueuse reconnoissance, mon devouement ne vous est pas nécessaire; mais il importe à mon bonheur de prouver au Roi et à la Nation Française que rien ne peut ralentir un zèle qui fait depuis long-tems l'intérêt de ma vie,

Je suis, &c.

*Signé* NECKER.

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 4. ]

*Réponse du Duc de Liancour Président de l'Assemblée au discours de Mr. Necker.*

SÉANCE DU 29 JUILLET 1790.

“ MONSIEUR, vous aviez en vous éloignant des affaires, emporté l'estime et les regrets de l'Assemblée Nationale, elle l'a consigné dans ses arrêtés; et en exprimant ainsi les sentimens dont elle étoit pénétrée, elle n'a été que l'interprète de la Nation. ”

“ Le moment de votre retraite a été celui d'un deuil général dans le Royaume. ”

“ Le Roi, dont le cœur généreux et bon vous est connu plus qu'à qui que ce soit, est venu dans cette Assemblée s'unir à nous; il a daigné nous demander nos conseils; nos conseils



devoient être ceux de la Nation ; ils étoient de rappeler à lui le ministre qui l'avoit servi avec tant de dévouement, de fidélité et de patriotisme ; mais déjà le cœur du Roi avoit pris de lui même ce conseil salutaire , et quand nous pensions à lui exprimer nos vœux, il nous remettoit la lettre qui vous invitoit à reprendre vos travaux , il désiroit que l'Assemblée Nationale y joignît ses instances, et il vouloit, pour gage de son amour, se confondre encore avec la Nation pour rendre à la France celui qui en causoit les regrets et qui en faisoit l'espérance. Vous vous étiez en partant dérobé aux hommages du peuple ; vous aviez employé, pour éviter l'expression de son estime, les mêmes soins qu'un autre eût pris pour fuir les dangers de son mécontentement et de sa haine. Vous touchiez au moment où, après une longue et pénible agitation, vous alliez trouver le calme et le repos, vous avez connu les troubles qui agitoient ce royaume, vous avez connu les vœux ardents du Roi et de la Nation ; et sans vous aveugler sur l'incertitude des succès dans la carrière qui, de nouveau, s'ouvroit à vous, vous n'avez pensé qu'à nos malheurs ; vous vous êtes rappelé ce que vous deviez à la France pour l'attachement et la confiance qu'elle vous donne ; vous n'avez plus pensé à votre repos ; et d'après vos propres expressions, vous avez, sans hésiter, *préféré le péril aux remords.* ”

“ L'empressement des peuples qui se portoient



en foule sur votre route, la joie pure et sincère qu'a reçu le Roi de votre retour, les mouvemens que fait naître votre présence dans cette salle où votre éloge étoit, il y a quelques jours, prononcé avec tant d'éloquence, et entendu avec tant d'émotion, tout vous est garant des sentimens de la France entière. „

“ La première Nation du monde voit en vous celui qui, ayant particulièrement contribué à la réunion de ses représentans, a le plus efficacement préparé son salut et peut seul dans ces momens d'embarras, faire disparoître les obstacles qui s'opposeroient encore à sa régénération. Quel homme avoit droit de prétendre à une si haute destinée ? Et quel titre plus puissant pouvoit assurer la France de votre dévouement le plus absolu ? ”

“ Peut-il donc être offert à la Nation un présage plus certain de bonheur, que la réunion des volontés d'un Roi prêt à tout sacrifier pour l'avantage de son peuple, d'une Assemblée Nationale qui fait à la félicité publique, le sacrifice des intérêts privés de tous les membres qui la composent et d'un ministre éclairé, qui, aux sentimens d'honneur qui lui rendent le bien nécessaire, joint encore la circonstance particulière d'une position qui le lui rend indispensable ?

“ Et quelle époque plus heureuse, Monsieur, pour établir la responsabilité des ministres, cette précieuse sauve-garde de la liberté, ce rempart



certain contre le despotisme, que celle où le premier qui s'y soumettra, n'aura de compte à rendre à la Nation, que celui de ses talens et de ses vertus ! ”

“ C'est d'après ce salutaire établissement, que vous avez sollicité vous-même, dont vous aurez été le premier exemple, que l'homme portant un cœur droit, des intentions pures, un caractère ferme, une conscience à l'abri de tout reproche, pourra, s'il est doué de quelque talent, aspirer ouvertement au ministère. Glorieux alors de l'idée qu'aucune action mauvaise, qu'aucune complaisance funeste, qu'aucune intrigue sourde ne pourront être dérobées au jugement de la Nation, il bravera les intentions obscures de la haine et de l'envie, et portera dans son cœur l'heureuse confiance que la vérité est toujours plus forte et plus convaincante que la calomnie, quand l'une et l'autre ne peuvent élever la voix que devant une Nation généreuse et éclairée. ”

“ C'est en vous soumettant aujourd'hui, Mr., à cette honorable épreuve, c'est en reprenant la place que vous avez consenti d'accepter, que l'exercice de vos talens, que votre fidélité inviolable aux intérêts de la Nation et du Roi, indissolublement liés, désormais sauront prouver à l'Europe, sans l'étonner, combien étoient justes et les regrets publics et l'allégresse universelle dont il appartient à vous seul d'être l'objet. ”

“ Si dans cette circonstance, il pouvoit m'être permis de laisser échapper l'expression d'un sen-



timent qui ne m'est que personnel, je dirois combien il m'est doux de lier l'époque glorieuse pour moi, d'une fonction honorable que je ne dois qu'à l'extrême indulgence de cette auguste Assemblée et que je ne puis justifier que par mon zèle à l'époque tant désirée de votre retour à un ministère que vous signalerez par votre attachement pour une constitution qui va bientôt assurer le bonheur de l'Empire. ”

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 5. ]

*Discours prononcé par Mr. Necker à l'Hôtel-de-Ville de Paris, le 30 Juillet 1789.*

“ JE manque d'expressions, Messieurs, pour vous témoigner et en votre personne, à tous les citoyens de Paris, la reconnoissance dont je suis pénétré. Les marques d'intérêt et de bonté que j'ai reçues de leur part, sont un bienfait hors de toute proportion avec mes foibles services ; et je ne puis m'acquitter que par un sentiment ineffaçable. Je vous promets, Messieurs, d'être fidèle à cette dernière obligation et jamais devoir ne sera plus doux ni plus facile à remplir. ”

“ Le Roi, Messieurs, a daigné me recevoir avec la plus grande bonté et m'assurer du retour de sa confiance la plus entière ; mais aujourd'hui, Messieurs, c'est entre les bras de l'Assemblée



Nationale, c'est dans les vôtres que repose le salut de l'État ; car en ce moment il ne reste presque plus aucune action au gouvernement. Vous donc, Messieurs, qui pouvez tant, et par la grandeur et par l'importance de la Ville dont vous êtes les notables citoyens, et par l'influence de votre exemple dans tout le Royaume, je viens vous conjurer de donner tous vos soins à l'établissement de l'ordre le plus parfait et le plus durable. Rien ne peut fleurir, rien ne peut prospérer sans cet ordre ; et ce que vous avez déjà fait, Messieurs, en si peu de tems, annonce et devient un garant de ce que vous saurez achever ; mais, jusqu'à ce dernier terme, la confiance sera incertaine, et une inquiétude générale troublera le bonheur public, éloignera de Paris un grand nombre de riches consommateurs et détournera les étrangers de venir y verser leurs richesses. Enfin Paris, cette cité, Paris cette première ville de l'Europe, ne reprendra son lustre et sa prospérité qu'à l'époque où l'on y verra régner cette paix et cette subordination qui calment les esprits et qui donnent à tous les hommes l'assurance de vivre tranquilles et sans défiance sous l'empire des lois et de leur conscience. ”

“ Vous jugerez, Messieurs, dans votre sagesse, s'il n'est pas tems bientôt de faire cesser ces persécutions multipliées, auxquelles on est soumis avant d'arriver à Paris, et que l'on commence à éprouver à une très-grande distance de  
la



la Capitale. Il est juste de s'en rapporter à cet égard à votre prudence et à vos lumières ; mais les amis de la prospérité publique doivent désirer que les abords de Paris rappellent bientôt au commerce et à tous les voyageurs, que cette ville est, comme autrefois, le séjour de la paix et qu'on peut de tous les bouts du monde y venir jouir avec confiance et liberté du génie industriel de ses habitans, et du spectacle de tous les monumens que cette ville renferme dans son sein, et que de nouveaux talens augmentent chaque jour. ”

“ Mais, Messieurs, c'est au nom du plus grand intérêt que je dois vous entretenir un instant d'un sentiment qui remplit mon cœur et qui l'opprime. Au nom de Dieu, Messieurs, plus de jugemens de proscription, plus de scènes sanglantes ! Généreux Français, qui êtes sur le point de réunir à tous les avantages dont vous jouissez depuis long-tems, le bien inestimable d'une liberté sage, ne permettez pas que de si grands bienfaits puissent être mêlés à la possibilité d'un reproche. Ah que votre bonheur, pour devenir encore plus grand, soit pur et sans tache ! Sur-tout conservez, respectez même dans vos momens de crise et de calamité, ce caractère de bonté, de justice et de douceur qui distingue la Nation française, et faites arriver le plutôt possible le jour de l'indulgence et de l'oubli. ”

“ Croyez, Messieurs, en ne consultant que votre cœur, que la bonté est la première de tou-



tes les vertus. Hélas nous ne connoissons qu'imparfaitement cette action, cette force invisible qui dirige et détermine les actions des hommes ! Dieu seul peut lire au fond des cœurs et juger avec sûreté, juger en un mot de ce qu'ils méritent de peine ou de récompense. Mais les hommes ne peuvent rendre un jugement, les hommes surtout ne peuvent ordonner la mort de celui à qui le ciel a donné la vie, sans l'examen le plus attentif et le plus régulier. ”

“ Je vous présente cette observation, cette demande, cette requête, au nom de tous les motifs capables d'agir sur les esprits et sur les ames ; et j'espère de votre bonté que vous me permettrez d'appliquer ces réflexions générales, ou plutôt l'expression de ces sentimens si vifs et si profonds, à une circonstance particulière et du moment. Je dois le faire d'autant plus que, si vous aviez une autre opinion que la mienne, j'aurois à m'excuser d'un tort auprès de vous, dont je dois vous rendre compte. ”

“ Mardi, jour de mon arrivée à Paris, j'appris à Nogent que M. le baron de Bezenval avoit été arrêté à Villenaux, et cette nouvelle me fut confirmée par un gentilhomme, seigneur du lieu, qui, sans connoître particulièrement M. de Bezenval, mais animé par un sentiment de bonté fit arrêter ma voiture pour me témoigner son inquiétude, et me demander si je ne pourrois pas être en se-



cours à M. le baron de Bezenval qui étoit parti pour la Suisse avec la permission du Roi. ”

“ J’avois appris la veille les malheureux évènements de Paris et le sort infortuné de deux magistrats accusés et exécutés rapidement. Mon ame s’émut et je n’hésitai point à écrire de mon carrosse ces mots-ci à Messieurs les officiers municipaux de Villenau : ”

“ Je sais positivement, Messieurs, que Mr. de Bezenval, arrêté par la milice de Villenau, a eu permission du Roi de se rendre en Suisse dans sa patrie. Je vous demande instamment, Messieurs, de respecter cette permission dont je suis garant, et je vous en aurai une particulière obligation. Tous les motifs qui affectent une ame sensible m’intéressent à cette demande. Mr. De \* \* \* veut bien se charger de ce billet que je vous écris dans ma voiture sur le grand chemin de Nogent à Versailles. ”

J’ai l’honneur d’être &c.

Ce Mardi 28 Juillet 1789.

“ J’ai appris, Messieurs, que ma demande n’a point été accueillie par Messieurs les officiers municipaux de Villenau, parce qu’ils vous avoient écrit pour recevoir vos ordres. Éloigné de Paris pendant les malheureux évènements qui ont excité vos plaintes, je n’ai aucune connoissance particulière des torts qui peuvent être re-



prochés à Mr. de Bezenval ; je n'ai jamais eu de relation de société avec lui ; mais la justice m'ordonne de lui rendre dans une affaire importante, un témoignage favorable. Il étoit commandant pour le Roi dans la généralité de Paris, où depuis deux à trois mois, il a fallu continuellement assurer la tranquillité des marchés, protéger des convois de grains ; il étoit donc nécessaire d'avoir continuellement recours au commandant détenu maintenant à Villenaux ; et quoique dans l'ordre ministériel, j'aurois dû m'adresser au secrétaire d'état de la guerre, qui auroit transmis les demandes du ministre des finances au commandant des troupes, Mr. de Bezenval m'écrivit fort honnêtement, que cette marche indirecte pourroit occasionner de la lenteur dans le service public, il m'invitoit à lui donner des instructions directes, et qu'il les exécuteroit ponctuellement. J'adoptai cette proposition, et je ne peux rendre trop de justice au zèle et à l'activité avec lesquels Mr. de Bezenval a répondu à mes désirs. J'ai remarqué constamment qu'il réunissoit de la modération et de la prudence à l'activité militaire, ensorte que j'ai souvent eu occasion de le remercier de ses soins et de son attention soutenue. Voilà, Messieurs, ce qui m'est connu de ce général en ma qualité d'homme public. ”

“ Je dois vous dire ensuite de la part du Roi, que Sa Majesté honore depuis long-tems cet offi-



cier de ses bontés. Je ne sais de quoi il peut être accusé auprès de vous ; mais, soumis aux loix de la discipline militaire, il faudroit peut-être des titres d'accusation bien formels pour l'em pêcher de retourner dans sa patrie ; et comme étranger, comme membre distingué d'un pays avec lequel la France a depuis si long-tems des relations d'alliance et d'amitié, vous aurez surement pour Mr. de Bezenval tous les égards qu'on peut espérer d'une Nation hospitalière et généreuse. Et puisque ce seroit déjà une grande punition que d'amener à Paris comme criminel ou suspect, un officier général étranger, qui retourne dans son pays avec la permission du Roi, j'ose vous prier de considérer, si vous ne pourriez pas vous borner à lui demander à Villenaux les éclaircissemens dont vous pourriez avoir besoin et la communication de ses papiers, s'il en avoit. C'est à vous, Messieurs, à considérer si vous devez exposer ce général étranger aux effets d'aucun mouvement dont vous ne pourriez pas répondre. Car distingués, comme vous êtes, Messieurs, par le choix de vos concitoyens, vous voulez sûrement être avant tous les défenseurs des loix et de la justice ; vous ne voulez pas qu'aucun citoyen soit condamné, soit puni, sans avoir eu le tems de se faire entendre, sans avoir eu le tems d'être examiné par des juges intègres et impartiaux ; c'est le premier droit de l'homme ; c'est le plus saint devoir des puissans, c'est l'obligation la plus constamment



respectée par les Nations. Ah ! Messieurs, non pas devant vous qui, distingués par une éducation généreuse, n'avez besoin que de suivre les lumières de votre esprit et de votre cœur ; mais devant le plus inconnu, le plus obscur des citoyens de Paris, je me prosterne, je me jette à genoux pour demander que l'on n'exerce ni envers Mr. de Bezenval, ni envers personne, aucune rigueur semblable en aucune manière à celles qu'on m'a récitées. La justice doit être éclairée et un sentiment de bonté doit encore être sans cesse autour d'elle. Ces principes, ces mouvemens dominant tellement mon ame, que si j'étois témoin d'aucun acte contraire dans un moment où je serois rapproché par ma place, des choses publiques, j'en mourrois de douleur, et toutes mes forces au moins seroient épuisées. ”

“ J'ose donc m'appuyer auprès de vous, Messieurs, de la bienveillance, dont vous m'honorez. Vous avez daigné mettre quelque'intérêt à mes services, et dans un moment où je vais en demander un haut prix, je me permettrai pour la première, pour la seule fois de dire qu'en effet mon zèle n'a pas été inutile à la France. Ce haut prix que je vous demande, ce sont des égards pour un général étranger, s'il ne lui faut que cela ; c'est de l'indulgence et de la bonté s'il a besoin de plus. Je serai heureux par cette insigne faveur, en ne fixant mon attention que sur Mr. de Bezenval, sur un simple particulier ; je le serois bien



d'avantage si cet exemple devenoit le signal d'une amnistie qui rendroit le calme à la France, et qui permettroit à tous les citoyens, à tous les habitans de ce Royaume de fixer uniquement leur attention sur l'avenir, afin de jouir de tous les biens que peuvent nous promettre l'union du peuple et du souverain et l'accord de toutes les forces propres à fonder le bonheur sur la liberté, et la durée de cette liberté sur le bonheur général. Ah ! Messieurs, que tous les citoyens, que tous les habitans de la France rentrent pour toujours sous la garde des loix. Cédez, je vous en supplie, à mes vives instances, et que par votre bienfait ce jour devienne le plus heureux de ma vie, et l'un des plus glorieux qui puisse vous être réservé, ”

[ N° 6. ]

*Première Lettre trouvée dans les papiers de Mr.  
d'Estaing, écrite de sa main.*

Lundi 14 Septembre 1789.

Mon devoir et ma fidélité l'exigent, il faut que je mette aux pieds de la Reine, ce que j'ai vu dans mon voyage de Paris. On m'a dit dans la société et dans la bonne compagnie, qu'on prend des signatures de la Noblesse et du Clergé ; les uns disent que c'est à la connoissance du Roi,



d'autres disent que c'est à son insçu. On dit que le Roi ira par la Champagne ou à Verdun ; Mr. *de Bouillé* est désigné, Mr. *de la Fayette* me l'a dit ; il est froidement positif Mr. *de la Fayette*. . . . . On nomma Mr. le maréchal de *Broglie* commandant le tout ; Mr. *de Breteuil* conduit le projet, Mr. *de Mercy* agit de concert. Ces propos, s'ils se répandoient dans le peuple, seroient incalculables . Je suis allé chez Mr. l'Ambassadeur d'Espagne, et c'est là, je ne le cache pas à la Reine, que mon effroi a redoublé. Mr. *de Ferdinand-Nunès* en a parlé avec moi, je lui ai parlé de ce bruit et de ce plan qui occasionneroient la plus déshonorante guerre civile. Après avoir parlé de la cour errante, de la banqueroute indispensable, Mr. l'Ambassadeur a baissé les yeux ; il est convenu que quelqu'un de considérable ou de croyable avoit reçu des signatures. Ce fait m'inspire un genre de terreur que je n'ai jamais connu ; la première démarche coûte assez cher, ce seroit des flots de sang : la Reine peut conquérir au Roi son royaume, la nature lui en a prodigué les moyens. . . . . Je supplie la Reine de m'accorder une audience.

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 6. ] (*bis.*)

*Autre Lettre de Mr. d'Estaing.*

Il m'est impossible de ne pas mettre aux pieds de la Reine mon admiration ; il faut qu'elle croie



uniquement ses véritables serviteurs ; sa fermeté triomphera tout. . . . . *L'ondulation des idées a failli tout perdre. . . . .* Les anciens Ministres du Roi n'ont peut-être mérité la haine que par l'instabilité des principes. Ils n'ont *pu empêcher ce malheureux dîner.* La santé à la Nation *a été omise à dessein ;* portée par des personnes augustes, elle auroit tout arrangé. . . . . Le hasard, car il est plus consolant d'y croire, a fait partir deux coups de pistolets, *partis de trop bas pour venir de gens à cheval.* J'ai voulu retenir la Garde Nationale de Versailles. *J'ai en vain retenu, ou relevé les coups. . . . .* Il faut un autre enthousiasme ; La Reine seule a le pouvoir de le faire naître ; la voilà sur un grand théâtre , avec quelques soins elle sera adorée. . . . . Ah ! Madame, soyez notre première citoyenne, vous serez tout, si vos principes vous permettent de le vouloir. *Le Clergé et la Noblesse n'ont que le Roi pour les sauver. . . . .* Mr. de la Fayette m'a juré que les évènements *en avoient fait un Royaliste.* Tout Français doit l'être *jusqu'à un certain point.*

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 7. ]

## L'ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE

AUX FRANÇAIS.\*

11 Février 1790.

L'Assemblée Nationale s'avancant dans la carrière de ses travaux, reçoit de toutes parts les fé-

\* Adresse rédigée par l'Évêque d'Autun.



licitations des provinces, des villes, des communautés, les témoignages de la joie publique, les acclamations de la reconnoissance ; mais elle entend aussi les murmures, les clameurs de ceux que blessent ou qu'affligent les coups portés à tant d'abus, à tant d'intérêts, à tant de préjugés. En s'occupant du bonheur de tous, elle s'inquiète des maux particuliers ; elle pardonne à la prévention, à l'aigreur, à l'injustice ; mais elle regarde comme un de ses devoirs de vous prémunir contre les influences de la calomnie, et de détruire les vaines terreurs dont on chercheroit à vous surprendre. Eh ! que n'a-t-on pas tenté pour vous égarer, pour ébranler votre confiance ? On a feint d'ignorer quel bien avoit fait l'Assemblée nationale : nous allons vous le rappeler. On a élevé des difficultés contre ce qu'elle a fait : nous allons y répondre. On a répandu des doutes, on a fait naître des inquiétudes sur ce quelle fera : nous allons vous l'apprendre.

Qu'a fait l'Assemblée ?

Elle a tracé d'une main ferme, au milieu des orages, les principes de la constitution qui assure à jamais votre liberté.

Les droits des hommes étoient méconnus, insultés depuis des siècles ; ils ont été rétablis pour l'humanité entière, dans cette déclaration qui sera à jamais le cri de ralliement contre les oppresseurs et la loi des législateurs eux-mêmes.

La Nation avoit perdu le droit de décréter et



les loix et les impôts: ce droit lui a été restitué, et en même tems ont été consacrés les vrais principes de la monarchie, l'inviolabilité du chef auguste de la Nation, et l'hérédité du trône dans une famille si chère à tous les Français.

Nous n'avions que des états généraux: vous avez maintenant une Assemblée nationale, et elle ne peut plus vous être ravie.

Des ordres, nécessairement divisés et asservis à d'antiques prétentions, y dictoient les décrets, et pouvoient y arrêter l'essor de la volonté nationale. Ces ordres n'existent plus: tout a disparu devant l'honorable qualité de citoyen.

Tout étant devenu citoyen, il vous falloit des défenseurs citoyens; et au premier signal on a vu cette garde nationale qui, rassemblée par le patriotisme, commandée par l'honneur, par-tout maintient ou ramène l'ordre, et veille, avec un zèle infatigable, à la sûreté de chacun pour l'intérêt de tous.

Des privilèges sans nombre, ennemis irréconciliables de tout bien, composoient tout notre droit public: ils sont détruits; et à la voix de votre Assemblée, les provinces les plus jalouses des leurs, ont applaudi à leur chute; elles ont senti qu'elles s'enrichissoient de leur perte.

Une féodalité vexatoire, si puissante encore dans ses derniers débris, couvroit la France entière: elle a disparu sans retour.

Vous étiez soumis, dans les provinces, au ré-



gime d'une administration inquiétante : vous en êtes affranchis.

Des ordres arbitraires attentoient à la liberté des citoyens : ils sont anéantis.

Vous vouliez une organisation complète des municipalités : elle vient de vous être donnée ; et la création de tous ces corps, formés par vos suffrages, présente en ce moment, dans toute la France, le spectacle le plus imposant.

En meme tems l'Assemblée nationale a consommé l'ouvrage de la nouvelle division du royaume, qui seule pouvoit effacer jusqu'aux dernières traces des anciens préjugés ; substituer à l'amour-propre de province l'amour véritable de la patrie ; asseoir les bases d'une bonne représentation, et fixer à la fois les droits de chaque homme et de chaque canton, en raison de leurs rapports avec la chose publique : problème difficile, dont la solution étoit restée inconnue jusqu'à nos jours.

Dès long-tems vous désiriez l'abolition de la vénalité des charges de magistrature : elle a été prononcée. — Vous éprouviez le besoin d'une réforme, du moins provisoire, des principaux vices du code criminel : elle a été décrétée, en attendant une réforme générale. — De toutes les parties du royaume nous ont été adressées des plaintes, des demandes, des réclamations : nous y avons satisfait autant qu'il étoit en notre pouvoir. — La multitude des engagemens publics effrayait : nous avons consacré les principes sur la foi qui leur est



due. — Vous redoutiez le pouvoir des ministres : nous leur avons imposé la loi rassurante de la responsabilité.

L'impôt de la gabelle vous étoit odieux ; nous l'avons adouci d'abord, et nous vous en avons promis l'entière destruction ; car il ne nous suffit pas que les impôts soient indispensables pour les besoins publics, il faut encore qu'ils soient justifiés par leur égalité, leur sagesse, leur douceur.

Des pensions immodérées, prodiguées, souvent à l'insçu de votre Roi, vous ravissoient le fruit de vos labeurs : nous avons jeté sur elles un premier regard sévère, et nous allons les renfermer dans les limites étroites d'une stricte justice.

Enfin, les finances demandoient d'immenses réformes : secondés par le ministre qui a obtenu votre confiance, nous y avons travaillé sans relâche, et bientôt vous allez en jouir.

Voilà notre ouvrage, Français, ou plutôt voilà le vôtre ; car nous ne sommes que vos organes, et c'est vous qui nous avez éclairés, encouragés, soutenus dans nos travaux. Quelle époque que celle à laquelle nous sommes enfin parvenus ! Quel honorable héritage vous allez transmettre à votre postérité ! Élevés au rang de citoyens, admissibles à tous les emplois, censeurs éclairés de l'administration, quand vous n'en serez pas les dépositaires, sûrs que tout se fait et par vous et pour vous, égaux devant la loi, libres d'agir, de parler, d'écrire, ne devant jamais compte aux



hommes, toujours à la volonté commune, quelle plus belle condition ! Pourroit-il être encore un seul citoyen vraiment digne de ce nom, qui osât tourner ses regards en arrière, qui voulût relever les débris dont nous sommes environnés, pour en récomposer l'ancien édifice !

Et pourtant, que n'a-t-on pas dit ? Que n'a-t-on pas fait pour affoiblir en vous l'impression naturelle que tant de biens devoient produire ?

Nous avons tout détruit, a-t-on dit : c'est qu'il falloit tout reconstruire. Et qu'y a-t-il donc tant à regretter ? Veut-on le savoir ? Que sur tous les objets réformés ou détruits, l'on interroge des hommes qui n'en profitoient pas ; qu'on interroge même la bonne foi des hommes qui en profitoient ; qu'on écarte ceux-là qui, pour ennoblir les afflictions de l'intérêt personnel, prennent aujourd'hui pour objet de leur commisération, le sort de ceux qui, dans d'autres tems, leur furent si indifférens ; et l'on verra si la réforme de chacun de ces objets ne réunit pas tous les suffrages, faits pour être comptés.

Nous avons agi avec trop de précipitation... et tant d'autres nous ont reproché d'agir avec trop de lenteur ! Trop de précipitation ! Ignore-t-on que c'est en attaquant, en renversant tous les abus à la fois, qu'on peut espérer de s'en voir délivré sans retour ; qu'alors, et alors seulement, chacun se trouve intéressé à l'établissement de l'ordre, que les réformes lentes et partielles ont toujours



fini par ne rien réformer; enfin, que l'abus que l'on conserve devient l'appui, et bientôt le restaurateur de tous ceux qu'on croyoit avoir détruits?

Nos assemblées sont tumultueuses... Et qu'importe, si les décrets qui en émanent sont sages? Nous sommes, au reste, loin de vouloir présenter à votre admiration les détails de tous nos débats. Plus d'une fois nous en avons été affligés nous-mêmes; mais nous avons senti en même tems qu'il étoit trop injuste de chercher à s'en prévaloir, et qu'après tout, cette impétuosité étoit l'effet presque inévitable du premier combat qui se soit peut-être jamais livré entre tous les principes et toutes les erreurs.

On nous accuse d'avoir aspiré à une perfection chimérique.... Reproche bizarre, qui n'est, on le voit bien, qu'un vœu mal déguisé pour la perpétuité des abus. L'Assemblée Nationale ne s'est point arrêtée à ces motifs, servilement intéressés ou pusillanimes: elle a eu le courage, ou plutôt, la raison de croire que les idées utiles, nécessaires au genre humain, n'étoient pas exclusivement destinées à orner les pages d'un livre, et que l'Être suprême, en donnant à l'homme la perfectibilité, apanage particulier de sa nature, ne lui avoit pas défendu de l'appliquer à l'ordre social, devenu le plus universel de ses intérêts, et presque le premier de ses besoins.

Il est impossible, a-t-on dit, de régénérer une



nation vieille et corrompue... Que l'on apprenne qu'il n'y a de corrompu que ceux qui veulent perpétuer des abus corrupteurs, et qu'une nation se rajeunit, le jour où elle a résolu de renaître à la liberté. Voyez la génération nouvelle. Comme déjà son cœur palpite de joie et d'espérance! Comme ses sentimens sont purs, nobles, patriotiques! Avec quel enthousiasme on la voit chaque jour briguer l'honneur d'être admise à prêter le serment de citoyen!... Mais pourquoi répondre à un aussi misérable reproche? L'Assemblée Nationale seroit-elle donc réduite à s'excuser de n'avoir pas désespéré du peuple français?

On n'a encore rien fait pour le peuple, a-t-on osé dire.... Et c'est sa cause qui triomphe partout. Rien fait pour le peuple! Et chaque abus que l'on a détruit ne lui prépare-t-il pas, ne lui assure-t-il pas un soulagement? Étoit-il un seul abus qui ne pesât sur le peuple?

Il ne se plaignoit pas.... C'est que l'excès de ses maux étouffoit ses plaintes.... Maintenant il est malheureux.... Dites plutôt : il est encore malheureux;.. Mais il ne le sera pas long-tems : nous en faisons le serment.

Nous avons détruit le Pouvoir Exécutif... Non : dites le Pouvoir Ministériel; et c'est lui qui détruisoit, qui souvent dégradoit le Pouvoir Exécutif. Le Pouvoir Exécutif! Nous l'avons éclairé en lui montrant ses véritables droits; sur-tout nous l'avons



l'avons ennobli en le faisant remonter à la véritable source de sa puissance, la puissance du peuple.

Il est maintenant sans force.... Contre la constitution et la loi : cela est vrai, mais en leur faveur il sera plus puissant qu'il ne le fut jamais.

Le peuple s'est armé. . . . . Oui, pour sa défense : il en avoit besoin. — Mais, dans plusieurs endroits, il en est résulté des malheurs. Peut-on les reprocher à l'Assemblée Nationale ? Peut-on lui imputer des désastres dont elle gémit, qu'elle a voulu prévenir, arrêter par toute la force de ses décrets, et que va faire cesser sans doute l'union désormais indissoluble entre les deux pouvoirs, et l'action irrésistible de toutes les forces nationales ?

Nous avons passé nos pouvoirs : la réponse est simple. Nous étions incontestablement envoyés pour faire une constitution : c'étoit le vœu, c'étoit le besoin de la France entière. Or étoit-il possible de la créer, cette constitution, de former un ensemble, même imparfait, de décrets constitutionnels, sans la plénitude des pouvoirs que nous avons exercés ? Disons plus : sans l'Assemblée Nationale, la France étoit perdue ; sans le principe qui soumet tout à la pluralité des suffrages libres, et qui a fait tous nos décrets, il est impossible de concevoir une Assemblée Nationale ; il est impossible de concevoir, nous ne disons pas une constitution, mais même l'espoir de détruire irrévocablement le moindre des abus. Ce principe est



d'éternelle vérité : il a été reconnu dans toute la France ; il s'est reproduit de mille manières dans ces nombreuses adresses d'adhésion, qui rencontrent sur toutes les routes cette foule de libelles, où l'on nous reproche d'avoir excédé nos pouvoirs. Ces adresses, ces félicitations, ces hommages, ces sermens patriotiques : quelle confirmation des pouvoirs que l'on vouloit nous contester !

Tels sont, Français, les reproches que l'on fait à vos représentans dans cette foule d'écrits coupables, où l'on affecte le ton d'une douleur citoyenne. Ah ! vainement on s'y flatte de nous décourager : notre courage redouble ; vous ne tarderez pas à en ressentir les effets.

L'Assemblée va vous donner une constitution militaire qui, composant l'armée de soldats citoyens, réunira la valeur qui défend la patrie, et les vertus civiques qui la protègent sans l'effrayer.

Bientôt elle vous présentera un système d'impositions qui ménagera l'agriculture et l'industrie, qui respectera enfin la liberté du commerce ; un système qui, simple, clair, aisément conçu de tous ceux qui paient, déterminera la part qu'ils doivent, rendra facile la connoissance si nécessaire de l'emploi des revenus publics, et mettra sous les yeux de tous les Français le véritable état des Finances, jusqu'à présent labyrinthe obscur, où l'œil n'a pu suivre la trace des trésors de l'État.

Bientôt un Clergé citoyen, soustrait à la pau-



vreté comme à la richesse, modèle à la fois du riche et du pauvre, pardonnant les expressions injurieuses d'un délire passager, inspirera une confiance vraie, pure, universelle, que n'altérera ni l'envie qui outrage, ni cette sorte de pitié qui humilie, il fera chérir encore davantage la Religion, il en accroîtra l'heureuse influence par des rapports plus doux et plus intimes entre les peuples et les pasteurs ; et il n'offrira plus le spectacle, que le patriotisme du Clergé lui-même a plus d'une fois dénoncé dans cette Assemblée, de l'oisiveté opulente, et de l'activité sans récompense.

Bientôt un système de loix criminelles et pénales, dictées par la raison, la justice, l'humanité, montrera, jusques dans la personne des victimes de la loi, le respect dû à la qualité d'homme, respect sans lequel on n'a pas le droit de parler de morale.

Un code des loix civiles, confié à des juges désignés par votre suffrage, et rendant gratuitement la justice, fera disparoître toutes ces loix obscures, compliquées, contradictoires dont l'incohérence et la multitude sembloient laisser, même à un juge intègre, le droit d'appeller justice sa volonté, son erreur, quelquefois son ignorance ; mais jusqu'à ce moment vous obéirez religieusement à ces mêmes loix, parce que vous savez que le respect pour toute loi, non encore révoquée, est la marque distinctive du vrai citoyen.

Enfin, nous terminerons nos travaux par un



code d'instruction et d'éducation nationale, qui mettra la constitution sous la sauve-garde des générations naissantes ; et faisant passer l'instruction civique par tous les degrés de la représentation, nous transmettrons, dans toutes les classes de la société, les connoissances nécessaires au bonheur de chacune de ces classes, en même tems qu'à celui de la société entière.

Voyez, Français, la perspective de bonheur et de gloire qui s'ouvre devant vous ! Il reste encore quelques pas à faire, et c'est où vous attendent les détracteurs de la révolution. Défiez-vous d'une impétueuse vivacité ; redoutez sur-tout les violences, car tout désordre peut devenir funeste à la liberté. Vous chérissez cette liberté ; vous la possédez maintenant : montrez-vous dignes de la conserver ; soyez fidèles à l'esprit, à la lettre des décrets de vos Représentans, acceptés ou sanctionnés par le Roi ; distinguez soigneusement les droits abolis sans rachat, et les droits rachetables, mais encore existans. Que les premiers ne soient plus exigés, mais que les seconds ne soient point refusés. Songez aux trois mots sacrés qui garantissent ces décrets : *La Nation, la Loi, le Roi*. La Nation, c'est vous ; la Loi, c'est encore vous, c'est votre volonté ; le Roi, c'est le gardien de la Loi. Quels que soient les mensonges qu'on prodigue, comptez sur cette union. C'est le Roi qu'on trompoit : c'est vous qu'on trompe maintenant, et la bonté du Roi



s'en afflige ; il veut préserver son peuple des flatteurs qu'il a éloignés du trône ; il en défendra le berceau de son fils ; car au milieu de vos Représentans, il a déclaré qu'il faisoit de l'héritier de la Couronne le gardien de la constitution.

Qu'on ne vous parle plus de deux partis. Il n'en est qu'un ; nous l'avons tous juré ; c'est celui de la liberté ; la victoire est sûre, attestée par les conquêtes qui se multiplient tous les jours. Laissez d'obscurs blasphémateurs prodiguer contre nous les injures, les calomnies ; pensez seulement que, s'ils nous louoient, la France seroit perdue. Gardez-vous sur-tout de réveiller leurs espérances par des fautes, par des désordres, par l'oubli de la loi. Voyez comme ils triomphent de quelque délais dans la perception de l'impôt, Ah ! ne leur préparez pas une joie cruelle ! Songez que cette dette.... Non ce n'est plus une dette : c'est un tribut sacré, et c'est la patrie maintenant qui le reçoit pour vous, pour vos enfans ; elle ne le laissera plus prodiguer aux déprédateurs qui voudroient voir tarir pour l'État le trésor public, maintenant tari pour eux : ils aspireroient à des malheurs qu'a prévenus, qu'a rendus impossibles la bonté magnanime du Roi. Français, secondez votre Roi, par un saint et immuable respect pour la loi, défendez contre eux son bonheur, ses vertus, sa véritable gloire ; montrez qu'il n'eut jamais d'autres ennemis que ceux de la liberté ; montrez que pour elle et pour lui votre constance



égalera votre courage ; que pour la liberté dont il est le garant, on ne se lasse point, on est infatigable. Votre lassitude étoit le dernier espoir des ennemis de la révolution ; ils le perdent : pardonnez-leur d'en gémir ; et déplorez sans les haïr, ce reste de foiblesse, toutes ces misères de l'humanité. Cherchons, disons même ce qui les excuse. Voyez quel concours de causes a dû prolonger, entretenir, presque éterniser leur illusion. Eh ! Ne faut-il pas quelque tems pour chasser de sa mémoire les fantômes d'un long rêve, les rêves d'une longue vie ? Qui peut triompher en un moment des habitudes de l'esprit, des opinions inculquées dans l'enfance, entretenues par les formes extérieures de la société, long-tems favorisées par la servitude publique qu'on croyoit éternelle, chères à un genre d'orgueil qu'on imposoit comme un devoir, enfin mises sous la protection de l'intérêt personnel qu'elles flattoient de tant de manières. Perdre à-la-fois ses illusions, ses espérances, ses idées les plus chéries, une partie de sa fortune : est-il donné à beaucoup d'hommes de le pouvoir sans quelques regrets, sans des efforts, sans des résistances d'abord naturelles, et qu'ensuite un faux point d'honneur s'impose quelquefois à lui-même ? Eh ! si dans cette classe naguères si favorisée, il s'en trouve quelques-uns qui ne peuvent se faire à tant de pertes à-la-fois, soyez généreux ; songez que, dans cette même classe, il s'est trouvé des hommes qui ont osé



s'élever à la dignité de citoyens, intrépides défenseurs de vos droits, et dans le sein même de leur famille, opposant à leurs sentimens les plus tendres, le noble enthousiasme de la liberté.

Plaignez, Français, les victimes aveugles de tant de déplorables préjugés; mais, sous l'empire des loix, que le mot de vengeance ne soit plus prononcé. Courage, persévérance, générosité, les vertus de la liberté, nous vous les demandons au nom de cette liberté sacrée, seule conquête digne de l'homme, digne de vous; par les efforts, par les sacrifices que vous avez faits pour elle, par les vertus qui se sont mêlées aux malheurs inséparables d'une grande révolution, ne retardez point, ne déshonorez point le plus bel ouvrage, dont les annales du monde nous aient transmis la mémoire. Qu'avez-vous à craindre? Rien, non rien, qu'une funeste impatience: encore quelques momens..... C'est pour la liberté! Vous avez donné tant de siècles au despotisme! Amis, citoyens, une patience généreuse, au lieu d'une patience servile. Au nom de la patrie, vous en avez une maintenant; au nom de votre Roi, vous avez un Roi: il est à vous, non plus le Roi de quelques milliers d'hommes, mais le Roi des Français. .... de tous les Français. Qu'il doit mépriser maintenant le despotisme! Qu'il doit le haïr! *Roi d'un peuple libre*, comme il doit reconnoître l'erreur de ces illusions mensongères qu'entretenoit sa cour qui se disoit son



peuple ! Prestiges répandus autour de son berceau, enfermés comme à dessein dans l'éducation royale, et dont on a cherché, dans tous les tems, à composer l'entendement des Rois pour faire, des erreurs de leurs pensées, le patrimoine des Cours. Il est à vous : qu'il nous est cher ! Ah ! depuis que son peuple est devenu sa Cour, lui refuserez-vous la tranquillité, le bonheur qu'il mérite ? Désormais, qu'il n'apprenne plus aucunes de ces scènes violentes, qui ont tant affligé son cœur ; qu'il apprenne, au contraire, que l'ordre renaît, que par-tout les propriétés sont respectées, défendues ; que vous recevez, que vous placez sous l'égide des loix, l'innocent le coupable. .... De coupable ! il n'en est point, si la loi ne l'a prononcé. Ou plutôt, qu'il apprenne encore, votre vertueux Monarque, quelques-uns de ces traits généreux, de ces nobles exemples qui déjà ont illustré le berceau de la liberté française. .... Étonnez-le de vos vertus, pour lui donner plutôt le prix des siennes, en avançant pour lui le moment de la tranquillité publique, et le spectacle de votre félicité.

Pour nous, poursuivant notre tâche laborieuse, voués, consacrés au grand travail de la constitution, votre ouvrage autant que le nôtre, nous le terminerons, aidés de toutes les lumières de la France ; et vainqueurs de tous les obstacles, satisfaits de notre conscience, convaincus, et d'avance heureux de votre prochain bonheur, nous place-



rons en vos mains ce dépôt sacré de la constitution, sous la garde des vertus nouvelles, dont le germe, enfermé dans vos ames, vient d'éclore aux premiers jours de la liberté.

*Signés, BUREAU DE PUZY, Président ; LABORDE DE MEREVILLE, l'abbé EXPILLY, le vicomte DE NOAILLES, GUILLOTIN, le baron DE MARGUERITES, le marquis DE LA COSTE, Secrétaire.*

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 8. ]

*Lettre de Mr. de Calonne au Roi, trouvée dans l'armoire de fer.*

SIRE,

Ce que j'ai à communiquer à Votre Majesté étant pour elle et pour ses peuples de la plus haute importance, rien ne peut arrêter mon zèle. Dois-je commencer par vous supplier, Sire, de ne voir que la chose sans songer à la personne ? Et faut-il qu'un serviteur dont la fidélité ne s'est jamais démentie, ait à craindre que son nom ne nuise à ses paroles ? Un jour Votre Majesté me rendra justice : oui, Sire, vous me la rendrez. Mais ce n'est pas en ce moment ce dont il est question : pourrois-je m'occuper de moi-même quand mon Roi est captif, et que ma patrie périt !

Je suis informé, Sire, que ceux qui s'acharnent à vous tromper s'efforcent de vous persuader que l'Angleterre influe dans les troubles qui boulever-



sent votre Royaume; que c'est de l'Angleterre qu'est venu l'argent employé à corrompre vos troupes, et à susciter des insurrections; enfin que cette Nation rivale, pour se venger de la perte de l'Amérique, s'occupe des moyens d'accroître nos désordres, et fomenté sous-main ce qui tend à l'entière destruction de la Monarchie française.

Il n'est rien, Sire, de plus contraire à la vérité, de plus opposé aux sentimens du Roi d'Angleterre, de plus éloigné des vues de ses ministres, et de plus incompatible avec la Constitution britannique, qui ne permet aucun emploi clandestin de sommes considérables. Si le ministre peut, en certains cas extraordinaires, suspendre momentanément l'explication d'un article de son compte, en le déclarant destiné à des objets politiques de nature à être tenus secrets, on sait du moins alors l'existence d'un tel article; son montant, et la réserve d'en dévoiler par la suite les causes, sont connus. Or il est constant que ni l'année dernière, ni cette année, il n'y a eu aucun article de ce genre, aucune réserve politique semblable, et je suis autorisé à dire qu'il n'y en aura aucune. C'est donc une chimère détruite par les règles mêmes du Gouvernement anglais, que de supposer qu'il ait envoyé de l'argent en France pour y alimenter la fermentation. Je pourrois ajouter qu'il ne faut que considérer l'état du change, pour reconnoître combien une telle supposition choque toutes les vraisemblances.



Mais comme les meilleures raisonnemens ne suffisent pas quand ceux qui, par leur état ou par leur mission, sont chargés de faire connoître la vérité, osent attester le contraire ; et comme l'erreur dans laquelle ils ont intérêt d'entretenir votre Majesté, pourroit l'entraîner dans des vues qui deviendroient funestes, ou la détourner de celles qui peuvent devenir salutaires, il m'a paru essentiel de vous convaincre, Sire, par des preuves palpables de l'absolue fausseté des perfides insinuations dans lesquelles peut-être se mêle encore le désir de me noircir de plus en plus à vos yeux.

C'est ce qui m'a engagé à en parler à M. Pitt, de manière cependant à ne pas attribuer à Votre Majesté elle-même des sentimens qui pussent paroître injurieux à ceux dont le Roi d'Angleterre fait profession. La pièce *cotée 1*, fait voir comment je me suis exprimé dans la note que M. Pitt m'a prié de lui laisser, et qu'il a mise sous les yeux du Roi d'Angleterre. J'étois bien sûr que sa Majesté britannique qui, plus d'une fois, m'avoit témoigné le vif intérêt qu'elle prenoit à la position de votre Majesté, s'empresseroit de détruire les doutes qu'on veut vous inspirer sur ses dispositions. Mon attente n'a pas été trompée : Georges III a chargé M. Pitt non-seulement de réitérer de sa part les assurances déjà données à ceux qui semblent ne les avoir pas transmises fort exactement, mais même de m'écrire à ce sujet une lettre conçue dans les termes les plus précis,



et dont je pusse faire usage pour détromper Votre Majesté.

J'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer, Sire, sous la cote 2, une copie certifiée de cette lettre de M. Pitt, en date du 6 de ce mois, à laquelle j'ai surabondamment accolé une traduction littérale, quoique je sache que votre Majesté peut entendre le texte anglois. Elle y verra ce qu'elle doit attendre d'un Monarque pénétré de cette vérité, que votre cause est la cause de tous les Souverains, et qui est profondément indigné des traitemens qu'on vous a fait. Comptez, Sire, avec confiance, sur la loyauté et l'élévation de ses sentimens ; ils sont tels, je suis fondé à le dire, et c'est ce que signifie la fin de la lettre de M. Pitt, que tout ce qui tendroit à rétablir votre trône, votre gloire, votre bonheur inséparable de celui de vos peuples, est dans son vœu, dans sa volonté la plus sincère, et qu'il seroit charmé de pouvoir y contribuer. Vous avez présentement sous les yeux la preuve qu'on ne sauroit imputer d'autres sentimens à son principal ministre, et je puis assurer que ce que l'on peut appeler *la Nation anglaise*, sans distinction d'aucun parti, est aussi loin de désirer l'accroissement de nos désordres et d'en profiter basement, qu'elle l'est d'approuver les excès de la Révolution ou d'être tentée de les irriter ; c'est une notoriété que personne ne peut contester, et à laquelle on opposeroit vainement la démarche ridiculisée ici, d'un club de particuliers fort peu considéré.



Si jamais, Sire, on a voulu vous faire entendre que je serois capable de préférer, en aucun cas, en aucun tems les intérêts de l'Angleterre à ceux de ma patrie et à la fidélité inébranlable que je vous ai jurée, on a dit une grande infamie, et j'ai à y opposer toute la bonne compagnie anglaise qui me connoît, qui m'a entendu, et dont le témoignage mérite plus de foi que des rapports envenimés : mais, si l'on dit que je suis charmé de la sagesse, de la raison, et de la noble façon de penser que je vois, et que ce moment-ci sur-tout m'a fait remarquer dans une Nation vraiment généreuse, pour qui d'ailleurs je dois être reconnoissant, je n'ai garde de m'en défendre, je saisis même cette occasion-ci de renouveler aux pieds de Votre Majesté, le vœu qu'elle sait que j'ai toujours formé de voir vos peuples et ceux-ci unis par les liens d'une franche et étroite amitié, qui feroit la prospérité des deux Empires et le bonheur du monde. Le même vœu existe dans le cabinet de Saint-James ; j'en suis certain ; et s'il survenoit un ordre de circonstances qui mît le Roi d'Angleterre à portée de manifester efficacement les sentimens exprimés dans la lettre écrite par son ordre, une alliance solide entre les deux Nations seroit le seul prix qu'il voudroit retirer des services qu'il auroit pu vous rendre.

Voilà, Sire, des vérités qu'il me paroît utile, même pressant de vous faire connoître, non pour donner aux réflexions et aux conséquences qui



doivent en résulter, plus d'essor que votre présente situation ne vous en permet, mais afin qu'au moins vous ne conserviez pas sur la puissance devenue, depuis trois ans, la plus influante dans la balance de l'Euorpe, une opinion erronée capable de déranger les idées qui peuvent germer dans les secrets de votre ame.

Oserai-je ajouter, Sire, que non-seulement toutes les branches de votre auguste maison, mais aussi toutes les puissances de l'Europe vous regardent [avec une attente mêlée d'inquiétude et de désirs favorables ; que tous les cœurs des vrais Français gémissent et s'irritent des attentats commis contre vos personnes sacrées ; que leur soulèvement unanime contre l'état de contrainte où l'on ose retenir leur Roi, est la seule conspiration qui existe, et que si cette sainte conspiration se contient, c'est uniquement parce que on croit entendre votre silence et qu'on le respecte ? Mais, Sire, si le cri du mécontentement, se fortifiant de jour en jour, venoit à éclater avec une énergie prédominante, si le génie tutélaire qui préside aux destinées de la France et à celles des Bourbons, armoit quelque jour une fidélité courageuse contre une licence effrénée, alors, sans doute, alors la France retrouveroit son Roi ; il ne se refuseroit pas à des hommages légitimes, et après s'être résigné à tout sacrifice, à se sacrifier lui-même pour ses peuples lorsqu'ils poursuivoient le fantôme du bonheur, il ne les abandonneroit certainement



pas lorsqu'ils voudroient se rédimer des horreurs de l'anarchie.

Ce sont, Sire, les sentimens, les vœux et les augures de celui qui est et qui sera, jusqu'au dernier souffle de sa vie,

De Votre Majesté,

Lonndres,  
le 9 Avril 1790.

Le très-fidèle sujet et très-  
obéissant serviteur.

*Signé,* DE CALONNE.

Je retiens l'original de la lettre de M. Pitt, n'étant pas assuré du sort de celle-ci, quoiqu'envoyée par le moyen le plus sûr que je puisse avoir. J'ose écrire en même-tems à la Reine, me fiant sur la pureté de mes motifs et sur l'intérêt du moment, qui me paroît devoir absorber toutes les impressions antérieures.

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 9. ]

### A P P R O B A T I O N,

D O N N É E par le Pape à l'exposition des principes sur la Constitution civile du Clergé, délibérée par les Evêques députés aux États-généraux et publiée en leur nom, et souscrite en forme d'adhésion par tous les Evêques de France, à l'exception de quatre, et par les Evêques étrangers ayant territoire et juridiction en France.



Cette approbation est consignée dans le Bref adressé par Sa Sainteté au Clergé de France et à la Nation Française, le 13 Avril 1791.

*Dilectis Filiis nostris S. R. E. Cardinalibus et Venerabilibus Archiepiscopis, Episcopis, et Dilectis Filiis Capitulis, Clero et Populo regni Galliarum : Salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem.*

PIUS P P. VI.

*Charitas quæ, docente Paulo apostolo &c. &c. &c.*

*Nostrum interea dolorem, quo vehementer affiebamur, non levis consolatio lenivit, dum interim major Episcoporum Gallicanorum pars sua sponte pastoralis sui muneris officiis addicta, et amore veritatis incensa, constanter adversabatur ipsi constitutioni, eamque oppugnabat in iis omnibus quæ ad Ecclesiæ regimen pertinerent. Huic autem consolationi nostræ novus quoque cumulus accessit, ubi Dilectus Filius noster S. R. E. Cardinalis Rupefucaldus, (\*) Venerabilesque Fratres Archiepiscopus Aquensis (†) aliique Archiepiscopi et Episcopi ad numerum usque triginta ut tot tantisque malis occurrerent ad nos confugerunt, die 10 Octob.*

(\*) Le Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld, Président de l'Ordre du Clergé aux États-généraux, avant la réunion des trois ordres.

(†) L'Archevêque d'Aix, (Boisgelin,) auteur de l'*Exposition des Principes*.

*litteris*



*litteris datis expositionem miserunt super principiis constitutionis clerisuo cujusque nomine subsriptam, consiliumque nostrum et opem postularunt et tutam agendi normam, in quâ conquiescerent à nobis exquisierunt tanquam à communi magistro et parente. Illud quoque magis magisque nostram consolationem adauxit quod alii Episcopi benè multi, primis adjuncti, prædictam expositionem amplexi fuerant, ita ut cùm ab Episcopis centum triginta et uno istius regni, quatuor dumtaxat dissiderent, cùmque tam ingenti Episcoporum numero, capitulorum etiam multitudo, et parochorum, sive pastorum secundi ordinis pars major accederet, hujusmodi sanè expositio, concordì animorum consensione suscepta totius Gallicani Ecclesiæ doctrina haberetur, et esset, . . . . .*

Datum Romæ apud S. Petrum, sub Annulo Piscatoris, die 13 Aprilis 1791, Pontificatûs nostri Anno XVII.

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 10. ]

*Lettre adressée au Roi par les Ministres, le 21  
Octobre 1790.*

SIRE,

Le vœu manifesté des représentans de la Nation vous déterminâ le 18 Juillet de l'année dernière,

D



à rappeler deux d'entre nous dans votre Conseil. L'Assemblée avoit déclaré solennellement, qu'ils avoient emporté dans leur retraite, l'estime et les regrets de la Nation. Vous voulûtes encore prendre dans le sein de l'Assemblée, ceux que depuis vous avez associés aux premiers, et elle en a remercié Votre Majesté, par l'organe de son président, qui lui dit en son nom, qu'elle les auroit présentés elle-même.

Ces honorables suffrages nous étoient nécessaires, pour espérer quelques succès, et malgré la difficulté des circonstances, nous crûmes devoir n'écouter que notre zèle et notre dévouement.

Nous avions en nous-mêmes le sentiment de la droiture de nos intentions, il nous fut peut-être permis de compter que la confiance publique nous accompagneroit près de vous, Sire, qu'elle ne pourroit nous être enlevée tant que nous y conserverions tous nos droits ; et la loi de la responsabilité à laquelle nous nous étions soumis avant même qu'elle fût prononcée, sembloit devoir nous mettre à l'abri des inculpations hazardées, mille fois plus dures que cette loi.

Ainsi nous avons dû mépriser les traits de la calomnie, les dénonciations vagues et tout ce qui auroit pu nous distraire des soins importans de l'administration.

Ainsi nous avons dû nous exposer à la haine des ennemis de l'ordre, et à la censure de ceux qui ne jugent les Ministres que par les évènements,



n'apprécient ni les obstacles ni le nombre et le degré d'efforts qui ont été déployés contre eux.

Il est consolant, il est glorieux pour nous de pouvoir invoquer votre témoignage auprès de Votre Majesté elle-même. Elle sait, et elle a eu la bonté de nous le dire quelquefois, combien, dans une carrière hérissée de difficultés toujours renaissantes, il nous a fallu du courage pour y persévérer et supporter le poids de nos places. Elle sait qu'il a fallu nous oublier sans cesse nous-mêmes, pour ne nous souvenir que de l'amour de Votre Majesté pour le bien des peuples, de l'importance de nos obligations et de notre dévouement à de si grands intérêts.

C'est dans les mêmes sentimens et les mêmes principes qui nous ont fait un devoir sacré de tout sacrifice utile, que nous devons maintenant supplier Votre Majesté de prendre en considération s'il ne convient pas à ses intérêts ainsi qu'à la chose publique de choisir d'autres ministres.

Nous avons lieu de juger par ce qui vient de se passer dans l'Assemblée Nationale que nous n'obtenons plus la confiance d'un grand nombre de ceux qui la composent, et quoiqu'elle ait dans sa justice rejeté le décret qui lui a été proposé, quoiqu'il n'ait été rien articulé de précis contre nous, quoique la généralité et l'amertume des imputations n'annoncent que l'impatience de fixer sur nous le tort des malheurs publics, et qu'il nous fût facile de rendre sensible la pureté de



notre conduite, soit dans son ensemble, soit dans tous ses détails, cependant il peut résulter de l'éclat même de cette discussion, et du fantôme de méfiance que l'on cherche à susciter contre nous, une impression fâcheuse pour le bien du service de Votre Majesté.

Daignez donc, Sire, peser dans votre sagesse ce que la circonstance demande de vous. Daignez imposer silence à votre bonté naturelle et ne consulter que l'intérêt de votre personne et de votre administration.

Notre amour pour notre patrie et pour notre Roi vivra toujours dans nos cœurs, et certes quelque puisse être notre sort, nous mériterons toujours d'être comptés au nombre des bons citoyens de votre Empire.

Nous sommes &c. &c.

*Signés, L'ARCHEVÊQUE DE BORDEAUX, LA LUZERNE, GUIGNARD, et LATOUR-DU-PIN.*

*Réponse du Roi aux Ministres.*

Saint-Cloud, le 22 Octobre.

Je suis très-touché des sentimens que vous me témoignez. Personne ne sait mieux que moi combien sont peu fondées les inquiétudes que l'on a conçues à votre sujet. Je vous ai toujours vus amis du peuple, de l'ordre, de la justice et des loix. Je prendrai en grande considération



votre lettre, je ferai connoître à chacun de vous mes intentions, et j'attends de votre zèle pour le bien public et de votre attachement pour moi, que jusques là vous n'abandonnerez pas vos fonctions.

*Signé* LOUIS.

*Lettre de Mr. de la Luzerne au Roi.*

Paris, le 23 Octobre 1790.

SIRE,

Tous vos Ministres ont mis sous vos yeux leur position et l'état des affaires publiques; mais j'ai plus particulièrement fait sentir à Votre Majesté qu'il m'est devenu impossible de lui rendre des services utiles dans le département qu'elle m'a confié.

Les désordres s'étoient d'abord répandus dans différentes provinces de la France, et s'y sont bientôt accrus. On a ébranlé ensuite la fidélité ou au moins la discipline de divers corps de troupes; aujourd'hui c'est dans les possessions les plus éloignées qu'on suscite des troubles; c'est parmi les équipages des escadres et les ouvriers des ports et arsenaux, qu'on a semé le germe de la licence et de l'insubordination.

Ces ports, ces arsenaux, ces escadres, on doit les regarder comme la véritable égide des colonies françaises; je prierai Votre Majesté d'agréer



que je lui expose bientôt dans un mémoire plus étendu, en quel état je les laisse; et que je lui rende un compte détaillé de mon administration; mais je vais rapidement tracer une esquisse qui en présentera les résultats; elle suffira pour constater les ressources faciles à trouver dans ce qui subsiste, et il importe de faire connoître dès ce moment le parti qui peut être tiré après moi, de ce qui a été fait pendant ma gestion.

Une marine matérielle beaucoup plus considérable qu'elle ne l'a jamais été depuis le commencement du siècle, les approvisionnemens qu'elle exige rassemblés, soixante-et-dix vaisseaux de ligne et soixante-cinq frégates à flot, ( je ne comprends dans ce nombre ni quatre vaisseaux et deux frégates qui peuvent être mis à l'eau avant la fin de cette année, ni huit autres vaisseaux et quatre frégates en construction, ) une foule d'excellens officiers qui se sont signalés pendant la dernière guerre, et qu'on a constamment exercés depuis cette époque, devroient rendre la France redoutable à toutes les puissances maritimes, préserver d'insulte ses colonies et être le plus sûr garant du maintien de la paix.

En ce moment néanmoins, les flottes des autres nations couvrent déjà les mers, et nos forces navales restent enchaînées; elles se trouvent condamnées à l'inaction et à l'inertie par l'indiscipline des marins, qui se perpétue par des mouvemens d'insurrection sans cesse renouvelés, par



les soupçons déraisonnables et injustes qu'on leur inspire chaque jour.

Désormais, Sire, un de vos anciens ministres auroit moins que qui que ce soit la faculté d'opposer à ce mal moral les remèdes qu'il faut y apporter. Il est nécessaire, il est instant, comme je l'ai constamment représenté depuis plusieurs jours, de me nommer un successeur. Je trahirois ma conscience et la vérité que je n'ai jamais dissimulée à Votre Majesté, en n'insistant pas de nouveau sur les motifs qui rendent cette mesure indispensable. Quel que soit celui que vous choisirez pour me remplacer, il est probable qu'il n'éprouvera pas les mêmes difficultés. On n'aura pas encore cherché à aliéner de lui l'opinion publique. Il recueillera au moins les prémices de la faveur populaire, faveur qui peut seconder efficacement ses efforts, et l'aider à établir l'ordre. Cette considération est si décisive et si urgente, qu'aucune autre dans les circonstances actuelles, ne doit la balancer. Mon dévouement pour vous, Sire, est et sera toujours sans bornes. Je n'offre à Votre Majesté qu'une nouvelle preuve de mon attachement pour ses véritables intérêts, et de ma fidélité à mes devoirs, en lui adressant ma démission et en la suppliant de l'accepter.

*Signé* LA LUZERNE.



*Réponse du Roi à Mr. de la Luzerne.*

Saint-Cloud, le 23 Octobre.

Vous m'avez, Monsieur, donné l'année dernière une grande preuve de votre attachement en reprenant votre place quand j'ai cru votre retour utile pour mon service et pour le bien de l'État. Vous pensez à présent que votre retraite est nécessaire. Je retrouve en cette occasion le sentiment qui vous a toujours conduit. Je désire que vous exposiez votre conduite, comme vous me paroissez dans la résolution de le faire, et j'en ferai usage suivant les circonstances. Je n'oublierai jamais, et j'aurai du plaisir à vous témoigner ma satisfaction des marques constantes de dévouement que vous m'avez données, et c'est à regret que j'accepte votre démission,

Signé, LOUIS,

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 11. ]*Tableau des dépenses de l'année 1791.*

|                                                        |                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Maison du Roi. . . . .                                 | 25,000,000 liv. |
| Maison des Princes et remplacement d'apanages. . . . . | 6,000,000       |
|                                                        | <hr/>           |
| TOTAL. . . . .                                         | 31,000,000 liv. |
|                                                        | <hr/>           |



|                                                                                                    |                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Montant de l'autre part. . .</i>                                                                | 31,000,000 liv. |
| Culte et dépenses accessoires. .                                                                   | 140,000,000     |
| Guerre. . . . .                                                                                    | 89,000,000      |
| Marine. . . . .                                                                                    | 50,000,000      |
| Affaires étrangères. . . . .                                                                       | 6,300,000       |
| Ministres et autres membres du<br>Conseil. . . . .                                                 | 460,000         |
| Bureau de l'Administration gé-<br>nérale de la direction du tré-<br>sor Royal et du trésor public. | 1,450,000       |
| Comptabilité. . . . .                                                                              | 300,000         |
| Administration, Contrôle des<br>Ponts et Chaussées, &c. . . .                                      | 206,000         |
| Ouvrages d'art et travaux à la<br>charge du trésor public. . . .                                   | 4,000,000       |
| Invalides et Quinze-Vingt. . . .                                                                   | 846,000         |
| Primes et encouragemens. . . .                                                                     | 4,000,000       |
| Universités, enseignement, tra-<br>vaux littéraires. . . . .                                       | 1,000,000       |
| Imprimerie Royale. . . . .                                                                         | 150,000         |
| Édifices religieux, Communaut.                                                                     | 400,000         |
| Bibliothèque du Roi. . . . .                                                                       | 110,000         |
| Jardin des Plantes. . . . .                                                                        | 100,000         |
| Dépôts publics. . . . .                                                                            | 20,000          |
| Écoles des Mines. . . . .                                                                          | 7,000           |
| Session de la Législature et ac-<br>cessoires. . . . .                                             | 6,000,000       |

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**TOTAL. . . .** 335,349,000 liv.

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|                                                                |                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Montant de l'autre part.</i> . . . . .                      | 335,349,000 liv. |
| Pensions. . . . .                                              | 16,000,000       |
| Rentes de l'Hôtel-de-Ville,<br>Payeurs et Contrôleurs. . . . . | 152,600,000      |
| Autres Rentes perpétuelles. . . . .                            | 4,000,000        |
| Autres Rentes viagères. . . . .                                | 3,000,000        |
| Rentes sur le Clergé. . . . .                                  | 3,000,000        |
| Rentes sur l'ancien Clergé. . . . .                            | 333,000          |
| Intérêts de l'emprunt de Sep-<br>tembre 1789. . . . .          | 2,600,000        |
| Intérêts d'emprunts et d'effets<br>remboursables. . . . .      | 10,000,000       |
| Intérêts d'emprunts des Pays<br>d'États. . . . .               | 6,000,000        |
| Autres intérêts de créances. . . . .                           | 129,646          |
| Intérêts de cautionnemens et<br>fonds d'avance. . . . .        | 8,000,000        |
| Amirauté. . . . .                                              | 6,020,000        |
| Intérêts des charges de Finance. . . . .                       | 2,400,000        |
| Emprunt de Gênes et d'Amster-<br>dam. . . . .                  | 3,840,000        |
| Indemnités. . . . .                                            | 1,000,000        |
| Achat de numéraire. . . . .                                    | 4,000,000        |
| Ateliers de charité momentanés. . . . .                        | 5,000,000        |
| Procédure criminelle. . . . .                                  | 3,000,000        |
| <hr/>                                                          |                  |
| TOTAUX. . . . .                                                | 566,271,646 liv. |
| <hr/>                                                          |                  |



[ N° 12. ]

*Lettre de M. l'Evêque d'Autun, aux Ecclésiastiques fonctionnaires du Département de Saône et Loire, du 29 Décembre 1790.*

Mes chers Collègues, l'Assemblée nationale ayant jugé nécessaire d'imposer aux fonctionnaires ecclésiastiques le serment de maintenir de tout leur pouvoir la constitution civile du Clergé, j'ai prêté ce serment, aussitôt que le décret qui l'ordonne a été accepté par le Roi, et je m'empresse de vous l'apprendre. Ce devoir que j'ai rempli, dans toute la sincérité de mon ame, vous le remplirez sûrement aussi dans les mêmes sentimens qui m'ont animé. Non-seulement vous verrez qu'il importe essentiellement au maintien, ou plutôt au retour de cette paix si désirable dont nous ne devons jamais perdre de vue que nous sommes les ministres ; mais vous verrez aussi qu'il ne renferme rien qui doive alarmer la conscience la plus craintive ; que les décrets qui règlent cette constitution, ont séparé avec un soin religieux ce qui appartient au dogme, de ce qui lui est entièrement étranger ; qu'ils ne sont, sur presque tous les points, qu'un retour respectable aux loix les plus pures de l'Eglise, que le tems, ou les passions humaines avoient si étrangement altérées, qu'ils



ont rendu plutôt que donné au peuple le droit si naturel de désigner ses pasteurs, et qu'en réduisant le nombre des Evêques par une nouvelle circonscription territoriale, ils n'offrent à l'esprit que l'exercice le plus légitime et le plus incontestable du pouvoir civil de toutes les nations, et non un empiétement sur l'autorité spirituelle. Vous observerez à ce sujet, que, même sous l'ancien ordre des choses, la puissance civile, toute incomplète quelle étoit, auroit pu incontestablement, par des motifs d'une grande utilité publique, auroit même dû, dans le cas, par exemple, d'une calamité locale, appeller les habitans d'un Diocèse dans un autre ; que cependant il seroit résulté de là, qu'un plus grand nombre de Fidèles auroient été placés sous la juridiction d'un des deux Evêques, tandis que l'autre n'auroit plus eu de juridiction à exercer, et que c'est précisément et uniquement ce qui a été décrété par l'Assemblée nationale, mais sans déplacement des personnes. Ce rapprochement bien simple, vous paroitra, j'espère, ainsi qu'à moi, tout à fait décisif. Enfin, Messieurs, en improuvant, et toutefois en cherchant à excuser, autant qu'il sera en vous, l'erreur ou l'illusion momentanée de ceux de nos collègues qui, jusqu'à ce jour, ont méconnu ces vérités, vous ferez avec moi les vœux les plus ardens pour que tous les esprits se réunissent promptement dans la profession des mêmes principes, et vous montrerez par votre exemple que



le civisme des pasteurs rend encore plus respectable aux yeux des peuples, la Religion qu'ils enseignent.

La nouvelle circonscription des Diocèses va m'unir aux travaux de plusieurs d'entre vous que je n'ai point encore l'avantage de connoître: je les conjure d'être bien convaincus que ce sera toujours un bonheur pour moi de concourir avec eux à tout ce que la Religion, la charité et le patriotisme leur inspireront pour le plus grand bien des peuples dont les intérêts nous sont confiés en commun.

*Signé, l'Évêque d'Autun.*

[ N°. 13. ]

*Projet d'adresse aux Français, rédigé par  
MIRABEAU, sur la Constitution civile  
du Clergé.*

FRANÇAIS, au moment où l'Assemblée nationale coordonne le sacerdoce à vos loix nouvelles, afin que toutes les institutions de l'Empire, se prêtant un mutuel appui, votre liberté soit inébranlable; on s'efforce d'égarer la conscience des peuples; on dénonce de toutes parts la constitution civile du Clergé, décrétée par vos Représentans, comme dénaturant l'organisation divine de l'Eglise chrétienne, et ne pouvant subsister



avec les principes consacrés par l'antiquité ecclésiastique.

Ainsi, nous n'aurions pu briser les chaînes de notre servitude, sans secouer le joug de la Foi! .... Non, la liberté est loin de nous prescrire un si impraticable sacrifice. Regardez, ô citoyens! Regardez cette Église de France, dont les fondemens s'enlacent et se perdent dans ceux de l'Empire lui-même, voyez comme elle se régénère avec lui, et comme la liberté qui vient du ciel, aussi bien que notre Foi, semble montrer en elle la compagne de son éternité et de sa divinité! Voyez comme ces deux filles de la raison souveraine s'unissent pour développer et remplir toute la perfectibilité de votre sublime nature, et pour combler votre double besoin d'exister avec gloire, et d'exister toujours!

On nous reproche d'avoir refusé de décréter explicitement que la Religion catholique, apostolique et romaine est la Religion nationale.

D'avoir changé, sans l'intervention de l'autorité ecclésiastique, l'ancienne démarcation des Diocèses, et troublé par cette mesure, ainsi qu'en d'autres points de la constitution civile du Clergé, la puissance Épiscopale.

Enfin, d'avoir aboli l'ancienne forme de la nomination des pasteurs, et de la faire déterminer par l'élection des peuples.

A ces trois points se rapportent toutes les accusations d'irréligion et de persécution dont on



vouloit flétrir l'intégrité, la sagesse et l'orthodoxie de vos Représentans. Ils vont répondre : moins pour se justifier que pour prémunir les vrais amis de la Religion contre les clameurs hypocrites des ennemis de la révolution.

Déclarer *nationale* la Religion chrétienne, eût été flétrir le caractère le plus intime et le plus essentiel du christianisme. En général, la Religion n'est pas, elle ne peut être un rapport social ; elle est un rapport de l'homme privé avec l'Être infini. Comprendriez-vous ce que l'on voudroit vous dire, si l'on vous parloit d'une *conscience nationale* ? Eh bien ! la Religion n'est pas plus nationale que la conscience ; car un homme n'est pas véritablement religieux, parce qu'il est de la religion d'une nation ; et quand il n'y en auroit qu'une dans l'univers, et que tous les hommes se seroient accordés pour la professer, il seroit encore vrai que chacun d'eux n'auroit un sentiment sincère de la Religion qu'autant que chacun seroit de la sienne ; c'est-à-dire, qu'autant qu'il suivroit encore cette Religion universelle quand le genre humain viendroit à l'abjurer.

Ainsi, de quelque manière que l'on envisage une Religion, la dire *nationale*, c'est lui attribuer une dénomination insignifiante ou ridicule.

Seroit-ce comme juge de la vérité, ou comme juge de son aptitude à former de bons citoyens que le législateur rendroit une Religion *constitutionnelle* ? Mais d'abord, y a-t-il des vérités na-



*tionales?* En second lieu, peut-il jamais être utile au bonheur public que la conscience des hommes soit enchaînée par la loi de l'État? La loi ne nous unit les uns aux autres que dans les points où nous nous touchons. Or, les hommes ne se touchent que par la superficie de leur être; par la pensée et la conscience, ils demeurent isolés; et l'association leur laisse à cet égard l'existence absolue de la nature.

Enfin, il ne peut y avoir de national dans un empire que des institutions établies pour produire des effets politiques, et la Religion n'étant que la correspondance de la pensée et de la spiritualité de l'homme avec la pensée divine, avec l'esprit universel, il s'ensuit qu'elle ne peut prendre sous ce rapport aucune forme civile ou légale. Le christianisme principalement s'exclut par son essence de tout système de législation locale. Dieu n'a pas créé ce flambeau pour prêter des formes et des couleurs à l'organisation sociale des Français; mais il l'a posé au milieu de l'univers pour être le point de ralliement et le centre d'unité du genre humain. Que ne nous blâme-t-on aussi de n'avoir pas déclaré que le soleil est *l'astre de la nation*, et que nul autre ne sera reconnu devant la loi pour régler la succession des nuits et des jours.

Ministres de l'Évangile! vous croyez que le christianisme est le profond et éternel système de Dieu, qu'il est la raison de l'existence d'un uni-



vers et d'un genre humain; qu'il embrasse toutes les générations et tous les tems; qu'il est le lien d'une société éparsée dans tous les Empires du monde, *et qui se rassemblera des quatre vents de la terre* pour s'élever dans les splendeurs de l'inébranlable Empire de l'éternité. Et avec ces idées si vastes, si universelles, si supérieures à toutes les localités humaines, vous demandez que par une loi constitutionnelle de notre régime naissant, le christianisme, si fort de sa majesté et de son antiquité, soit déclaré la Religion des Français.

Ah ! c'est vous qui outragez la Religion de nos pères. Vous voulez que, semblable à ces Religions mensongères, nées de l'ignorance des hommes, accréditées par les dominateurs de la terre, et confondues dans les institutions politiques comme un moyen d'oppression, elle soit déclarée la Religion de la loi et des Césars !

Sans doute, là où une croyance absurde a enfanté un régime tyrannique, là où une constitution perverse dérive d'un culte insensé, il faut bien que la Religion fasse partie essentielle de la constitution.

Mais le christianisme, foible et chancelant dans sa naissance, n'a point invoqué l'appui des loix, ni l'adoption des gouvernemens : ses ministres eussent refusé pour lui une existence légale, parce qu'il falloit que Dieu seul parût dans ce qui n'étoit que son ouvrage; et il nous manqueroit aujourd'hui la preuve la plus éclatante de sa vé-



rité, si tous ceux qui professoient avant nous cette Religion sainte, l'eussent trouvée dans la législation des *Empires*.

O étrange conséquence! Quels sont ces hommes qui nous demandoient, avec une chaleur et une amertume si peu chrétienne, un décret qui rendît le christianisme *constitutionnel*? Ce sont les mêmes qui blâmoient la constitution nouvelle; qui la présentoient comme la subversion de toutes les loix de la justice et de la sagesse, qui la dénonçoient de toute part comme l'arme de la perversité, de la force et de la vengeance; ce sont les mêmes qui nous disoient que cette constitution devoit perdre l'Etat et déshonorer la Nation française.

O hommes de mauvaise foi! pourquoi vouliez-vous donc introduire une Religion que vous faites profession de chérir et d'adorer dans une législation que vous faites gloire de décrier et de haïr? pourquoi vouliez-vous unir ce qu'il y a de plus auguste et de plus saint dans l'univers à ce que vous regardez comme le plus scandaleux monument de la malice humaine? *Quel rapport, vous diroit S. Paul, peut-il s'établir entre la justice et l'iniquité? et que pourroit-il y avoir de commun entre le Christ et Bélial?*

Non, Français! ce n'est ni la bonne foi, ni la piété sincère qui suscitent au milieu de vos Représentans toutes ces contestations religieuses; ce sont les passions des hommes qui s'efforcent



de se cacher sous des voiles imposans pour couvrir plus impunément leurs ténébreux desseins.

Remontez au berceau de la Religion ; c'est là que vous pourrez vous former l'idée de sa vraie nature, et déterminer le mode d'existence sous lequel son divin fondateur a voulu qu'elle régnât dans l'univers. Jésus-Christ est le seul de tous les Sages qui se sont appliqués à instruire les hommes et à les rendre bons et heureux, qui ne les ait envisagés sous aucun rapport politique, et qui n'ait, en aucune circonstance, mêlé à son enseignement des principes relatifs à la législation des Empires. Quelle que soit l'influence de l'Evangile sur la moralité humaine, jamais J. C. ni ses disciples ne firent entendre que l'institution évangélique dût entrer dans les loix constitutionnelles des nations. Il n'ordonne nulle part à ceux qu'il a choisis pour publier sa doctrine, de la présenter aux législateurs du monde comme renfermant des vues nouvelles sur l'art de gouverner les peuples : *Allez et instruisez les hommes, en disant, voici que le Royaume de Dieu approche ; et lorsque vous entrerez dans une ville ou dans un hameau, demandez qui sont ceux qui veulent vous écouter, et restez y autant qu'il le faudra pour leur apprendre ce que vous devez leur enseigner ; mais si l'on refuse de vous écouter, sortez ; et soyez en tout prudents comme les serpents, et simples comme les colombes.*

L'Evangile est donc, par son institution, une



économie toute spirituelle offerte aux mortels en tant qu'ils ont une destination ultérieure aux fins de l'association civile, et considérée hors de toutes les relations politiques ; il est proposé à l'homme comme sa seconde raison, comme le supplément de sa conscience, et non à la société comme un nouvel objet de mesures législatives. Enfin, l'Évangile a demandé, en paroissant au monde, que les hommes le *reçussent*, et que les gouvernemens le *souffrissent* : c'est là le caractère extérieur qui le distingua dès son origine de toutes les autres Religions qui avoient tyrannisé la terre, et c'est aussi ce qui doit le distinguer jusqu'à la fin des tems, de tous les cultes qui ne subsistent que par leur incorporation dans les loix des Empires.

C'est donc une vérité établie sur la nature des choses, sur les lumières du bon sens, et sur l'essence même de l'institution évangélique, que vos Représentans, ô Français ! ne devoient, ni ne pouvoient décréter *nationale*, la Religion catholique, apostolique et romaine.

Mais, puisque le christianisme est une économie toute spirituelle, hors de la puissance et de l'inspection des hommes, pourquoi nous sommes-nous attribué le droit de changer, sans l'intervention spirituelle, l'ancienne démarcation des Diocèses ?

Certes, on devroit nous demander aussi pourquoi nous sommes chrétiens, pourquoi nous avons assigné sur le trésor national, aux Ministres de



l'Évangile et aux dépenses du culte, la plus solide partie des revenus de l'État ?

D'après les élémens de la constitution chrétienne, son culte est l'objet de *l'acceptation* libre des hommes et de la *tolérance* des gouvernemens. Il ne peut être réputé que *souffert*, tant qu'il n'est reçu et observé que par un petit nombre des citoyens de l'Empire ; mais, dès qu'il est devenu le culte de la majorité de la Nation, il perd sa dénomination de *culte toléré*, il est alors un *culte reçu* : il est de fait *la Religion du public*, sans être de droit, *la Religion nationale*, car une Religion n'est pas adoptée par la Nation, en tant qu'elle est une *puissance*, mais en tant qu'elle est une *collection* d'hommes.

Dans cet état du culte, son exercice n'ayant aucune correspondance avec l'ordre civil, il en résulte plusieurs conséquences.

*Premièrement.* L'autorité ecclésiastique peut partager entre les pasteurs, la conduite spirituelle des fidèles, suivant telles divisions ou démarcations que lui prescrivent son intérêt et sa sagesse ; et le gouvernement, qui n'est lié par aucun point au régime religieux, n'a rien à voir, ni à réformer dans des circonscriptions qui n'ont pas de visibilité politique.

*Secondement.* Dans cette situation du culte, qui fut si long-tems la seule que l'ancien sacerdoce ait demandée aux puissances de la terre, la subsistance des ministres, la construction et l'entretien



des temples, et toutes les dépenses du cérémonial religieux, sont une charge étrangère au fisc ; car ce qui n'appartient pas à l'institution politique, ne peut être du ressort de la dépense publique.

*Troisièmement.* Mais du moment que l'institution chrétienne, adoptée par la majorité des citoyens de l'Empire, a été allouée par la puissance nationale ; du moment que cette même puissance, prenant sur elle toutes les charges de l'État temporel de la Religion, et pourvoyant à tous les besoins du culte de ses ministres, a garanti sur la foi de la Nation et sur les fonds de son trésor, la perpétuité et l'immutabilité de l'acceptation qu'elle a faite du christianisme, dès-lors cette Religion a reçu dans l'État une existence civile et légale, qui est le plus grand honneur qu'une Nation puisse rendre à la sainteté et à la majesté de l'Évangile, et dès-lors aussi c'est à cette puissance nationale qui a donné à l'institution religieuse une existence civile, qu'appartient la faculté d'en déterminer l'organisation civile, et de lui assigner sa constitution extérieure et légale. Elle peut et elle doit s'emparer de la Religion, selon le caractère public qu'elle lui a imprimé, et par tous les points où elle l'a établie en correspondance avec l'institution sociale. Elle peut et elle doit s'attribuer l'ordonnance du culte dans tout ce qu'elle lui a fait acquérir d'extérieur, dans toute l'ampleur physique qu'elle lui a fait contracter, dans tous les rapports où elle l'a mis avec la grande



machine de l'Etat; enfin, dans tout ce qui n'est pas de sa constitution spirituelle, intime et primitive. C'est donc au gouvernement à régler les démarcations diocésaines, puisqu'elles sont le plus grand caractère public de la Religion, et la manifestation de son existence légale. Comment le ministère sacerdotal ne seroit-il pas subordonné, dans le partage des fonctions du culte, à la même autorité qui prescrit les limites de toutes les autres fonctions publiques, et qui détermine toutes les circonscriptions de l'Empire?

Eh! que l'on nous dise ce que signifie l'intervention de l'autorité spirituelle dans une distribution toute politique. Une nation qui, recevant dans son sein, et unissant à son régime la Religion chrétienne, dispose tellement le système de toutes ses administrations, que partout où elle trouve des hommes à gouverner, là aussi elle prépose un premier pasteur à leur enseignement religieux; une telle nation s'attribue-t-elle un pouvoir sacerdotal? Entreprend-t-elle quelque chose sur les consciences, sur les dogmes de la Foi, sur ses sacrements, sur ses rapports et ses dépendances hiérarchiques?

Mais, nous dit-on, la juridiction spirituelle des Evêques a changé avec l'ancienne division des diocèses, et il faut bien que le Pontife de Rome intervienne pour accorder aux Evêques des pouvoirs accommodés à la nouvelle constitution. Que ceux d'entre nos pasteurs qui ont le cœur droit et l'esprit capable d'observation, s'élèvent au



dessus des idées et des traditions d'une théologie inventée pour défigurer la Religion, et la subordonner aux vues ambitieuses de quelques hommes, et ils reconnoîtront que le fondateur du christianisme semble avoir constitué son sacerdoce d'après la prévoyance de sa destinée future; c'est-à-dire, qu'il l'a fait tel qu'il pût se prêter à toutes les formes civiles des Etats où l'institution chrétienne seroit adoptée, et s'exercer dans toutes les directions et selon toutes les circonscriptions qui lui seroient assignées par les loix des Empires.

Est-ce en donnant à chacun d'eux une portion de puissance limitée par des bornes territoriales que J. C. a institué les Apôtres? Non; c'est en conférant à chacun d'eux la plénitude de la puissance spirituelle, ensorte qu'un seul, possédant la juridiction de tous, soit établi le pasteur du genre humain. " Allez, leur dit-il; répandez-vous „ dans l'Univers; prêchez l'Évangile à toute créa- „ ture. . . . . Je vous envoie comme mon Père „ m'a envoyé. ”

Si donc, au moment de leur mission, les Apôtres se fussent partagé l'enseignement de l'univers, et qu'ensuite les puissances fussent venues changer les circonscriptions qu'ils s'étoient volontairement assignées, aucun d'eux se seroit-il inquiété que sa juridiction ne se trouvât pas la même? Croit-on qu'ils eussent reproché à l'autorité publique de s'attribuer le droit de restreindre ou d'é-



tendre l'autorité spirituelle ? Pense-t-on sur-tout qu'ils eussent invoqué l'intervention de St. Pierre pour se faire réintégrer dans les fonctions de l'Apostolat par une mission nouvelle ?

Et pourquoi auroient-ils recours à ce premier chef de l'Eglise universelle ? Sa primauté ne consistoit pas dans la possession d'une plus grande puissance spirituelle, ni dans une juridiction plus éminente et plus étendue. Il n'avoit pas reçu de mission particulière ; il n'avoit pas été établi le pasteur des hommes par une inauguration spéciale et séparée de celle des autres Apôtres. St. Pierre étoit pasteur en vertu des mêmes paroles qui donnèrent à tous ses collègues l'Univers à instruire, et le genre humain à sanctifier. Aussi voyons-nous St. Paul et les autres Apôtres établir des Evêques et des Prêtres, dans les différentes contrées où ils ont porté le flambeau de l'Evangile, et les instituer pasteurs des troupeaux qu'ils ont conquis au christianisme dès son origine, et nous ne voyons nulle part qu'ils aient invoqué, pour remplir cet objet sacré, l'autorité de St. Pierre, ni que les nouveaux pasteurs aient attendu de lui l'institution canonique.

Quelle idée les Pontifes de notre culte ont-ils donc de leur mission, puisqu'ils n'y reconnoissent plus le même caractère dont les Apôtres furent revêtus ? S'il est vrai que le sacerdoce chrétien n'a été institué qu'une fois pour tous les siècles, la puissance apostolique ne subsiste-t-elle pas au-



jourd'hui dans les Evêques comme successeurs des Apôtres à l'universalité de sa primitive institution ? Chacun d'eux au moment de sa consécration n'est-il pas devenu ce que fut chaque Apôtre au moment où il reçut la sienne aux pieds du Pasteur éternel de l'Eglise ? Et n'est-il pas envoyé comme J. C. l'a été par son Père ? Enfin, n'at-il pas été investi d'une aptitude applicable à tous les lieux, à tous les hommes, et toujours subsistante, sans nulle altération, au milieu de tous les changemens, de tous les accroissemens et de toutes les variations que peuvent éprouver la démarcation des Eglises ?

*Veillez votre conduite*, dit St. Paul aux Evêques qu'il avoit établis en Asie, *veillez votre conduite et celle du troupeau pour lequel le St. Esprit vous a consacrés Evêques, en vous donnant le gouvernement de l'Eglise de Dieu, que J. C. a fondée par son sang*. Pesez ces paroles, et demandez-vous si St. Paul croyoit à la *localité* de la juridiction épiscopale.

Les Evêques sont donc essentiellement chargés du régime de l'Eglise universelle, comme l'étoient les Apôtres : leur mission est actuelle, immédiate, et absolument indépendante de toute circonscription locale. L'onction de l'épiscopat suffit aussi à leur institution, et ils n'ont pas plus besoin de la sanction du Pontife de Rome que S. Paul n'eut besoin de celle de S. Pierre. Le Pontife de Rome n'est comme S. Pierre le fut



lui même, que le pasteur indiqué pour être le point de réunion de tous les pasteurs, l'interpellateur des juges de la Foi, le dépositaire de la croyance de toutes les Eglises, le conservateur de la communion universelle, et le surveillant de tout le régime intérieur et spirituel de la Religion.

Or, tous ces rapports n'établissent aucune distinction ni aucune dépendance réellement hiérarchique entre lui et les Evêques des autres Eglises; et ceux-ci ne lui doivent en montant sur le siège, que l'attestation de leur union au centre de la Foi universelle, de leur volonté d'être pasteurs dans l'esprit et dans le sens de la croyance catholique, et de correspondre au saint siège comme au principal tronc de l'autorité que J. C. a donnée à son Eglise.

On ne connut jamais dans l'antiquité ecclésiastique d'autres formes pour l'installation des Pontifes: *je professe*, écrivoit autrefois un Evêque au Pape S. Damase, *que je suis uni de communion à votre Sainteté, c'est-à-dire, à la Chaire de S. Pierre. Je sais que l'Eglise a été bâtie sur cette pierre. Celui qui mange la Pâque hors de cette maison, est un profane ; qui n'amasse pas avec vous, est un dissipateur.* Voilà la détermination précise du rapport que J. C. a établi entre S. Pierre et les autres Apôtres, et la seule règle de la correspondance à maintenir entre Rome et toutes les Eglises de la catholicité ; et c'est aussi la seule dont l'Assemblée Nationale ait recommandé l'obser-



vation aux premiers pasteurs de l'Eglise de France.

C'est en recourant à cette source antique et incorruptible de la vraie science ecclésiastique, que les bons esprits se convaincront aussi que les Evêques métropolitains reçoivent, par la seule *occupation* du siège désigné pour métropole, tous les pouvoirs nécessaires pour exercer leurs fonctions. C'est sur-tout en France une vérité de principe, que la puissance épiscopale n'a d'autres limites, que celles que des considérations d'ordre et de police ont forcé de prescrire; c'est-à-dire, des bornes purement territoriales. Les métropoles ne sont-elles-mêmes que des établissemens de police. L'épiscopat du métropolitain n'est pas différent de celui de ses Evêques suffragans. Sa supériorité sur eux, il ne la tient pas d'une mission particulière, mais seulement de la ville où son siège est établi. Cette espèce d'hierarchie sacerdotale, étoit toute calquée sur la hiérarchie civile; et les empereurs désignaient à leur gré, le siège de ces établissemens.

Nous accusera-t-on d'avoir encore rétréci la puissance épiscopale, d'avoir élevé le simple sacerdoce au niveau de l'Episcopat? Ne semble-t-il pas plutôt que notre premier objet dans les dispositions que nous avons statuées sur son régime, ait été de lui rendre cette immensité qu'il eut dans son origine, et de détruire toutes ces limites où un ancien et épais nuage de préjugés



et d'erreurs en avoit concentré l'exercice? A moins que ce n'eût été rompre la gradation hiérarchique qui distingue les premiers pasteurs inférieurs, que de donner à l'Evêque de chaque Eglise un conseil, et de régler qu'il ne pourroit faire aucun acte d'autorité *en ce qui concerne le gouvernement du diocèse* qu'après en avoir délibéré avec le presbytère diocésain: comme si cette supériorité que le pontife possède *de droit divin* sur son clergé l'affranchissoit du devoir imposé *de droit naturel* à tous les hommes chargés d'un soin vaste et difficile, d'invoquer le secours et de consulter les lumières de l'expérience, de la maturité et de la sagesse: comme si dans ce point, de même que dans tous les autres, l'Assemblée Nationale n'avoit pas rétabli les usages de l'ancienne Eglise. *Tout s'y faisoit par conseil, dit FLEURY, parce qu'on ne cherchoit qu'à y faire régner la raison, la règle, la volonté de Dieu..... En chaque Eglise, l'Evêque ne faisoit rien d'important sans le conseil des prêtres de son diocèse et des principaux de son clergé. Souvent même il consultoit tout le peuple, quand il avoit intérêt à l'affaire comme aux ordinations.*

Mais la même puissance qui possède exclusivement la législation nationale a-telle pu et dû faire disparoître l'ancienne forme de la nomination des pasteurs, et la soumettre à l'élection des peuples?

Oui, certes, elle a eu ce droit; si l'attribution



d'une fonction appartient essentiellement à ceux qui en sont l'objet et la fin ; et le sacerdoce français lui doit aussi à cet égard l'exemple du respect et de l'obéissance. C'est pour les hommes qu'il existe une Religion et un sacerdoce, et non pour la divinité qui n'en a pas besoin. *Tout Pontife, dit S. Paul, choisi du milieu des hommes, est établi pour le service des hommes ; il doit être tel qu'il sache compatir à l'ignorance, se plier à la faiblesse, et éclairer l'erreur.*

Et non seulement l'Apôtre proclame ici le droit du peuple aux élections ecclésiastiques, comme dérivant de la nature des choses, mais il l'appuie par des considérations particulières d'ordre et de circonstance. Le service sacerdotal est un ministère d'humanité, de condescendance, de zèle et de charité ; c'est pourquoi St. Paul recommande de ne confier qu'à des hommes doués d'une ame vraiment paternelle et sensible, qu'à des hommes dès long-tems exercés aux bonnes actions, et connus publiquement par leurs inclinations pacifiques et leurs habitudes bienfaisantes ; c'est pourquoi aussi il indique pour juges de leur aptitude aux fonctions de Pontife et de pasteur du peuple, ceux qui ont été les spectateurs de leur conduite et les objets de leurs soins.

Cependant, parce que l'Assemblée Nationale de France, chargée de proclamer les droits sacrés du peuple, l'a rappelé aux élections ecclésiastiques, parce qu'elle a rétabli l'antique forme de



ces élections, et tiré de sa désuétude un procédé qui fut une source de gloire pour la Religion, aux beaux jours de sa nouveauté, voilà que des ministres de la Religion crient à l'usurpation, au scandale, à l'impiété; réprouvent comme un attentat à la plus imprescriptible autorité du Clergé, le droit d'élection restitué au peuple, et osent réclamer le concours prétendu nécessaire du Pontife de Rome.

Lorsqu'autrefois un Pape immoral et un despote violent fabriquèrent, à l'insu de l'Eglise et de l'Empire, ce contrat profane et scandaleux, ce concordat qui n'étoit que la coalition de deux usurpateurs, pour se partager les droits et l'or des Français, on vit la Nation et son Clergé opposer à ce brigandage tout l'éclat d'une résistance unanime, redemander les élections, et revendiquer avec une énergie persévérante *la pragmatique*, qui seule avoit fait jusqu'alors le droit commun du Royaume.

Et c'est ce concordat irréligieux, cette convention simoniaque qui, au tems où elle se fit, attira sur elle tous les anathêmes du sacerdoce français; c'est cette stipulation criminelle de l'ambition et de l'avarice, ce pacte ignominieux qui imprimoit, depuis des siècles, aux plus saintes fonctions la tache honteuse de la vénalité, qu'aujourd'hui nos prélats ont l'impudeur de réclamer au nom de la Religion, à la face de l'univers, à côté du berceau



de la liberté, dans le sanctuaire des loix régénératrices de l'Empire et de l'Autel.

Mais, dit-on, le choix des pasteurs confié à la disposition du peuple ne sera plus que le produit de la cabale.

Parmi les plus implacables détracteurs du rétablissement des élections, combien en est-il à qui nous pourrions faire cette terrible réponse? “ Est-ce à vous à emprunter l'accent de la piété pour condamner une loi qui vous assigne des successeurs dignes de l'estime et de la vénération de ce peuple qui n'a cessé de conjurer le ciel d'accorder à ses enfans un pasteur qui les console et les édifie? Est-ce à vous d'invoquer la Religion contre la stabilité d'une constitution qui doit en être l'inébranlable appui; vous qui ne pourriez soutenir un seul instant la vue de ce que vous êtes, si, tout à coup l'austère vérité venoit à manifester au grand jour les ténébreuses et lâches intrigues qui ont déterminé votre élévation à l'Episcopat, vous qui êtes les créatures de la plus perverse administration, vous qui êtes le fruit de cette iniquité effrayante, qui appelloit aux premiers emplois du sacerdoce ceux qui croupissoient dans l'oisiveté et l'ignorance, et qui fermoit impitoyablement les portes du sanctuaire à la portion sage et laborieuse de l'ordre ecclésiastique?

Comment ces hommes qui font ostentation d'un si grand zèle pour assurer aux Eglises un choix de pasteurs dignes d'un nom si saint, com-



ment ont-ils donc pu se taire si long-tems, lorsqu'ils voyoient le sort de la Religion, et le partage des augustes fonctions de l'Apostolat abandonnés à la gestion d'un ministre esclave des intrigues qui environnoient le trône? Les occasions de s'élever contre un sacrilège trafic, se présentoient au Clergé à des époques régulièrement renaissantes : que faisoit-il dans ses assemblées? Au lieu de chercher un remède à la déplorable destinée de la Religion, et d'éclairer la sagesse d'un prince religieux et juste, sur l'impiété qui laissoit le soin de pourvoir de pasteurs l'Eglise de France aux impitoyables oppresseurs qui se jouoient de la détresse et des larmes du peuple, il portoit puérilement aux pieds du Monarque un vain et lâche tribut d'adulation, et des contributions dont il imposoit la charge à la classe pauvre, assidue et résidente des ouvriers évangéliques.

Et qui ne voit que demander une autre forme de nomination aux offices ecclésiastiques, c'eût été dans nos prélats, condamner trop ouvertement leur création anti-canonique, et s'avouer à la face de la Nation pour des *intrus* qu'il falloit destituer ou remplacer.

Que si, n'osant régénérer d'une manière absolue le rétablissement de la forme élective pour les offices ecclésiastiques, les Prélats nous répètent encore que le mode décrété par le Corps législatif, est *contraire aux formes anciennes* qui toujours accordèrent au sacerdoce les honneurs



de la prépondérance, nous leur demanderons s'ils ont trouvé cette influence fondée sur une loi précise de la constitution évangélique, et si elle étoit un effet des règles sur lesquelles J. C. a organisé le régime de la Religion, nous leur demanderons quelles furent les premières élections qui suivirent immédiatement la fondation du Christianisme. La multitude des disciples choisit sur l'invitation des Apôtres, sept hommes pleins du S. Esprit et de sagesse, pour les aider dans les soins de l'Apostolat. Ces hommes reçurent des Apôtres l'imposition des mains, et ils furent les premiers Diacres.

Et de nos jours, quand et comment le Clergé intervenoit-il donc dans le travail de la distribution des places diocésaines et paroissiales? Il y avoit des sièges pontificaux à remplir, et le Roi les donnoit. Il y avoit des titres de riches Abbayes à conférer, et la Cour les conféroit. Une très-grande partie des bénéfices-cures étoient à la disposition des patrons ou collateurs laïcs, et ces laïcs en dispoient. Un non catholique, un juif, par la simple acquisition de certaines seigneuries, devenoient les arbitres de la destinée de la Religion et de l'état moral d'un grand nombre de Paroisses. Ainsi les grands titres et les grandes places de l'Eglise se distribuoient sans la participation et même à l'inçu du Clergé; et ce qui lui restoit de droit sur les nominations obscures et subalternes,



ne servoit qu'à rendre plus publique et plus sensible sa nullité en administration bénéficiale.

Sans doute, il fut un âge de l'Eglise où le sacerdoce présidoit les assemblées convoquées pour créer des Pasteurs, et le peuple régloit, sur le suffrage du Clergé, la détermination de son choix; mais pourquoi nos Prélats, au lieu de s'arrêter à des tems intermédiaires, où les formes primitives étoient altérées, ne remontent-ils pas jusqu'à ces élections si contiguës au berceau de l'Eglise où chaque ville et chaque hameau avoit son Pontife et où le peuple seul proclamoit et intrônisoit son Pasteur? Car il faut bien remarquer que l'association du Clergé aux assemblées électives date de la diminution des sièges episcopaux, c'est-à-dire, qu'elle a sa cause dans la difficulté d'assembler la multitude de ceux qui appartenoient à une seule Eglise.

A ces mêmes époques où le sacerdoce étoit l'ame des assemblées convoquées pour l'élection des ministres du sanctuaire, les Evêques pauvres et austères portoient tout le fardeau du ministère religieux. Les Prêtres inférieurs n'étoient que leurs assistans. C'étoient les Evêques seuls qui offroient le sacrifice public, qui prêchoient les fidèles, qui catéchisoient les enfans, qui portoient les aumônes de l'Eglise dans les réduits de l'infortune, qui visitoient les asiles publics de la vieillesse, de l'infirmité et de l'indigence, qui parcouroient de leurs pieds meurtris et vénérables,



les vallées profondes et les montagnes escarpées, pour répandre les lumières et les consolations de la Foi dans le sein des innocens, habitans des champs et des bourgades. Voilà des faits précisément parallèles à celui de l'influence des Evêques sur le choix des Pasteurs. Or, voudroit-on transformer ces *faits* en autant de points du *droit* ecclésiastique, et prononcer que la conduite des Prélats, qui n'évangélisent pas leur troupeau, et qui voyagent dans des chars somptueux, est contraire à la constitution essentielle de l'Eglise?

La forme adoptée par l'Assemblée nationale est donc la plus saine, puisqu'elle est la plus conforme aux procédés des tems apostoliques, et que rien n'est si évangélique et si pur que ce qui dérive de la haute antiquité ecclésiastique.

La coupable résistance des Prêtres aux loix de leur pays, l'opiniâtreté de leurs efforts pour faire revivre le double despotisme du sacerdoce et du trône, ont aliéné d'eux la confiance de leurs concitoyens, et ils n'ont pas été appelés de nos jours en grand nombre dans les corps chargés désormais de proclamer les choix du peuple.

Mais le tems arrivera où une autre génération de Pasteurs créés par les citoyens, s'attachant aux loix et à la liberté, comme à la source de son existence et de sa vraie grandeur, regagnera cette haute considération, qui donnoit tant d'autorité au sacerdoce de l'ancienne Eglise, et rendoit sa présence si chère à ces assemblées majestueuses,



où les mains d'un peuple innombrable portoient solennellement la thiare sacrée sur la tête la plus humble et la plus sage.

Alors les défiances inquiètes et les soupçons fâcheux disparoîtront. La confiance, le respect et l'amour du pauvre ouvriront aux Prêtres les portes de ces assemblées comme aux plus respectables conservateurs de l'esprit public et de l'incorruptible patriotisme. On s'honorera de déférer à leurs suffrages; car rien n'est en effet plus honorable pour une Nation, que d'accorder une grande autorité à ceux que son choix n'a pu appeler aux grandes places de la Religion, sans leur reconnoître l'avantage des grands talens et le mérite des grandes vertus. Alors le sacerdoce et l'Empire, la Religion et la patrie, le sanctuaire des mystères sacrés, et le temple de la liberté, des loix, au lieu de se croiser et de se heurter au gré des intérêts qui divisent les hommes, ne composeront plus qu'un seul système de bonheur public, et la France apprendra aux nations, que l'Evangile et la liberté sont les bases inséparables de la vraie législation, et le fondement éternel de l'état le plus parfait du genre humain.

Voilà l'époque glorieuse et salutaire qu'a voulu préparer l'Assemblée nationale, que hâteront de concert avec les loix nouvelles, la lumière et les vertus du sacerdoce, mais que pourroient aussi reculer ses préjugés, ses passions, ses résistances.



Pasteurs et disciples de l'Évangile, qui calomniez les principes des législateurs de votre patrie, savez-vous ce que vous faites ? Vous consolez l'impiété des insurmontables obstacles que la loi avoit opposés aux progrès de son désolant système ; et c'est de vous-mêmes que l'ennemi du dogme évangélique attend aujourd'hui l'abolition de tout culte, et l'extinction de tout sentiment religieux. Figurez-vous que les partisans de l'irreligion, calculant les gradations par où le faux zèle de la Foi la conduit à sa perte, prononcent dans leur cercle ce terrible discours.

“ Nos représentans avoient reporté sur les bases antiques l'édifice du christianisme, et nos mesures pour le renverser étoient à jamais déconcertées. Mais ce qui devoit donner à la Religion une si grande et si imperturbable existence, devient maintenant le gage de notre triomphe et le signal de la chute du sacerdoce et de ses temples. Voyez ces Prélats et ces Prêtres qui soufflent dans toutes les contrées du Royaume l'esprit de soulèvement et de fureur ; voyez ces protestations perfides où l'on menace de l'enfer ceux qui reçoivent la liberté, et qui refusent de redemander l'esclavage auxquels ils ont échappé. Voyez cette affectation de prêter aux législateurs de l'Empire le caractère atroce des anciens persécuteurs des chrétiens. Voyez le sacerdoce méditant sans cesse des moyens pour s'emparer de la force publique, pour la déployer contre ceux qui l'ont



dépouillé de ses anciennes usurpations, pour remonter sur le trône de son orgueil, pour faire refluer dans ses palais un or qui en étoit le scandale et la honte. Voyez avec quelle ardeur il égare les consciences, alarme la piété des simples, effraie la timidité des foibles, et comme il s'attache à faire croire au peuple que la révolution et la Religion ne peuvent subsister ensemble. ”

Or, le peuple finira par le croire en effet ; et balancé dans l'alternative d'être chrétien ou libre, il prendra le parti qui coûtera le moins à son besoin de respirer de ses anciens malheurs : et alors il abjurera son christianisme ; il maudira ses pasteurs ; il ne voudra plus connoître ni adorer que le Dieu créateur de la nature et de la liberté ; et alors tout ce qui lui retracera le souvenir du Dieu de l'Evangile lui sera odieux ; il ne voudra plus sacrifier que sur l'autel de la patrie ; il ne verra ses anciens temples que comme des monumens qui ne sauroient plus servir qu'à attester combien il fut long-tems le jouet de l'imposture et la victime du mensonge, il ne pourra donc plus souffrir que le prix de sa sueur et de son sang soient appliqués aux dépenses d'un culte qu'elle rejette, et qu'une portion immense de la ressource publique soit appliquée à un sacerdoce conspirateur. Et voilà comment cette Religion, qui a résisté à toutes les controverses humaines, étoit destinée à s'anéantir dans le tombeau que lui consacroient ses propres ministres.



Ah ! tremblez que cette supputation de l'incrédulité ne se soit fondée sur les plus alarmantes vraisemblances ! Ne diroit-on pas que tous ceux qui se font une étude de décrier comme attentatoire aux droits de la Religion, le procédé que vos représentans ont suivi dans l'organisation du ministère ecclésiastique ; ne croiroit-on pas qu'ils ont le même but que l'impiété, qu'ils prévoient le même dénouement, et qu'ils sont résolus à la perte du Christianisme, pourvu qu'ils soient vengés, et qu'ils aient épuisé tous les moyens de recouvrer leur puissance et de nous replonger dans la servitude. C'est-à-dire, que la seule différence qui distingue ici la doctrine irréligieuse de l'aristocratie ecclésiastique ; c'est que la première ne souhaite la ruine de la Religion, que pour rendre plus sûr le triomphe de la constitution et de la liberté, et que la seconde ne tend à la destruction de la Foi que dans l'espoir de la voir entraîner dans sa chute la liberté et la constitution de l'Empire : l'une n'aspire à voir sa loi s'éteindre parmi nous, qu'en croyant qu'elle est un obstacle à la parfaite liberté des hommes ; l'autre expose la Foi aux plus grands dangers, dans le dessein de vous ravir ce que vous avez reconquis de vos droits, et de jouir encore une fois de votre abaissement et de votre misère. Enfin, l'une ne hait dans la Religion que ce qui paroît y consacrer des principes favorables aux tyrans ; et l'autre la livre volontairement à tous les hazards



d'un choc dont elle attend le retour de la tyrannie, et la renaissance de tous les ordres. Ainsi, l'esprit d'humanité qui se mêle aux entreprises de l'incrédulité contre l'Évangile, en adoucit et en fait, en quelque sorte, pardonner la témérité et l'injustice. Mais comment pourroit être excusé notre sacerdoce du mal qu'il fait à la Religion, pour renfoncer les hommes dans le malheur et recouvrer une puissance dont la privation soulève toutes ses passions et consterne toutes ses habitudes ?

O vous, qui êtes de bonne foi avec le Ciel et votre conscience, pasteurs qui n'avez balancé jusqu'à ce jour à sceller de votre serment la nouvelle constitution civile du clergé, que par l'appréhension sincère de vous rendre complices d'une usurpation ; rappelez-vous ces tems anciens où la Foi chrétienne, réduite à concentrer toute sa majesté et tous ses trésors dans le silence et les ténèbres des cavernes, tressailloit d'une joie si douce et si pure lorsqu'on venoit annoncer à ses pontifes austères et vénérables le repos du glaive de la persécution, lorsqu'on leur apprenoit la fin d'un règne cruel et l'avènement d'un prince plus humain et plus sage, lorsqu'ils pouvoient sortir avec moins de frayeur des cavités profondes où ils avoient érigé leurs autels pour aller consoler et affermir la piété de leurs humbles disciples, lorsqu'ils pouvoient laisser sortir de dessous terre



quelques éteincelles du flambeau divin dont ils gardoient le précieux dépôt.

Or, supposons que l'un de ces hommes vénérables, sortant tout-à-coup de ces catacombes antiques où sa cendre est confondue avec celles de tant de Martyrs, vienne aujourd'hui contempler au milieu de nous la gloire dont la Religion s'y voit environnée, et qu'il découvre d'un coup-d'œil tous ces temples, ces tours qui portent si haut dans les airs les éclatans attributs du Christianisme, cette croix de l'Evangile qui s'élance du sommet de tous les départemens de ce grand Empire : quel spectacle pour les regards de celui qui en descendant au tombeau n'avoit jamais vu la Religion que dans les antres des forêts et des déserts ! Quels ravissemens, quels transports ! Je crois l'entendre s'écrier, comme autrefois cet étranger, à la vue du camp du peuple de Dieu. *O Israël, que vos tentes sont belles ! O Jacob, quel ordre, quelle majesté dans vos pavillons ! . . . .*

Calmez donc, ah ! calmez vos craintes, prêtres, ministres du Dieu de paix et de vérité : rougissez de vos exagérations incendiaires, et ne voyez plus notre ouvrage à travers vos passions. Nous ne vous demanderons pas de jurer contre la loi de votre cœur, mais nous vous demanderons au nom du Dieu saint qui doit nous juger tous, de ne pas confondre des opinions humaines et des traditions scholastiques, avec les règles inviolables et sacrées de l'Evangile. S'il est contraire



à la morale d'agir contre sa conscience, il ne l'est pas moins de se faire une conscience d'après des principes faux et arbitraires. L'obligation de faire sa conscience est antérieure à l'obligation de suivre sa conscience. Les plus grands malheurs publics ont été causés par des hommes qui ont cru obéir à Dieu et sauver leurs ames.

Et vous adorateurs de la Religion et de la patrie, Français, peuple fier, mais généreux, contemplez votre état passé et votre situation à venir. Qu'étoit la France, il y a peu de mois ? Les sages y invoquoient la liberté et la liberté étoit sourde à la voix des sages. Les chrétiens éclairés demandoient où s'étoit réfugiée la Religion de leurs pères, et la vraie Religion de l'Evangile ne se retrouvoit nulle part. Nous étions une Nation sans patrie, un peuple sans gouvernement et une Eglise sans caractère et sans régime.....

Il n'y avoit de régulier et de stable parmi nous que la déflagration de tous les vices, que le scandale de toutes les injustices, que le mépris public du Ciel et des hommes, que l'extinction totale des derniers principes de la Religion et de la morale. Quel pays que celui où tout se trouvoit à la disposition absolue de quelques hommes sans frein, sans honneur, et sans lumières, et devant qui Dieu et le genre humain étoient comptés pour rien ! Et quelle révolution que celle qui fait succéder tout-à-coup à ce désordre un spectacle où tout se place et s'ordonne selon l'ancien vœu



de la nature , et où l'on ne voit plus dissonner que la fureur impuissante de quelques ames incapables de s'élever à la hauteur d'un sentiment public, et faites pour rester dans la bassesse de leurs passions personnelles !

Français ! vous êtes les conquérans de votre liberté ; vous l'avez reproduite au sein de ce vaste Empire par les grands mouvemens de votre courage ; soyez-en maintenant les conservateurs par votre modération et votre sagesse. Répandez autour de vous l'esprit de patience et de raison, versez les consolations de la fraternité dans le sein de ceux de vos concitoyens à qui la révolution a imposé de douloureux sacrifices ; et n'oubliez jamais que si la régénération des Empires ne peut s'exécuter que par l'explosion de la force du peuple, elle ne peut non plus se maintenir que dans le recueillement des vertus et de la paix. Songez que le repos et le silence d'une nation victorieuse de tant d'efforts et de complots, dirigés contre son bonheur et sa liberté, sont encore la plus redoutable des résistances à la tyrannie qui voudroit tenter de relever ses remparts, et que rien ne déconcerte plus efficacement les desseins des pervers que la tranquillité des grands cœurs.



[ N<sup>o</sup>. 14. ]

*Extrait d'une Lettre de Mgr. l'Evêque d'Uzès  
à ses grands vicaires.*

le 5 Janvier 1791.

LE jour d'hier sera fameux dans les fastes du Clergé de France. C'est le premier où j'aie reçu quelque consolation. si nous avons combattu pour la gloire nous pourrions dire que nous n'avons rien à désirer ; mais un intérêt d'une bien autre nature étoit confié à notre courage. Je ne suis pas sans espoir que cette journée ne sauve la Religion en France ; mais je suis sûr au moins qu'elle l'a glorifiée.

L'heure fatale étoit arrivée, l'expiration du délai nous a été annoncée, on a délibéré de nous interroger, les uns après les autres, pour prêter le serment ; la fermeté la plus calme étoit notre contenance. L'Evêque d'Agen, appelé le premier, a dit quelques phrases d'une noblesse simple, franche, touchante, qui ont produit le plus grand effet. Un de ses Curés appelé après lui, a fait aussi une de ces réponses qui enfoncent la crainte dans l'ame des pervers et la honte dans celle des faibles. Alors l'effroi a gagné nos ennemis ; la confusion s'est mise au milieu d'eux ; ils ne savoient



quel parti prendre ; ils essayèrent de plates et ridicules séductions, en annonçant que l'intention de l'Assemblée n'avoit pas été de toucher au spirituel. Nous demandons que cette explication soit convertie en décret et la mauvaise foi se démasque par un refus.

Le tumulte et l'indécision de ces Messieurs allongent la séance et aucun ecclésiastique ne montre ni foiblesse ni inquiétude. Alors ils abandonnent la forme d'appel individuel, qui auroit prolongé leur tourment d'être témoins du triomphe de la vérité. Ils ont ordonné une interpellation générale à ceux qui n'avoient pas encore prêté le serment. Elle a été faite et personne ne s'est présenté. Enfin notre immuable fermeté les a forcés à leur grand regret à décréter contre nous ; et nous sommes sortis de cette séance, dépouillés de tout, mais fiers de notre glorieuse pauvreté.

Les deux ou trois cents brigands, employés dans ces occasions majeures, entouroient le dehors de la salle et y faisoient même retentir le cri, *à la lanterne*. Nous y avons souri dédaigneusement et nous avons demandé qu'on ne s'occupât point de ces vaines clameurs ; pas de vrai et bon peuple autour de la salle ; pas le moindre mouvement dans Paris contre nous ; et l'estime publique nous a suivis dans nos retraites.

Le Roi est prié de faire nommer à nos places. Il est à remarquer que ce décret, fait pour in-



introduire le schisme en France, s'il est exécuté, a été rendu sous la présidence d'un Juif et sur la motion d'un Protestant.

Je ne puis vous rendre mille détails qui seroient intéressans, mais le tems me manque. Voilà l'essentiel. Nous avons soutenu la première attaque d'une manière digne du devoir que nous avions à remplir. Nous soutiendrons de même toutes les épreuves, jusqu'à la dernière, la mort, si l'on ose y aller. Ce n'est pas de notre côté qu'est la crainte et l'indécision. Nous les laissons à ceux qui n'écoutent pas leur conscience et qui ne suivent pas les principes.

Nous pleurons sur quatre-vingt dix-huit de nos confrères trompés, ou entraînés, avant cette séance. C'est beaucoup, sur deux cents soixante-huit que nous sommes; mais une grande majorité nous reste. L'Evêque d'Autun est le seul Evêque qui ait prêté le serment. Nous ne comptons pas l'Evêque de Lydda étranger au clergé de France, et qui a mis à son serment des restrictions qu'on a laissé passer, parce qu'il siège du côté gauche.

Montrez ma lettre. Je ne crains jamais quand j'écris, parce que la vérité est mon guide; et il est essentiel qu'elle soit connue, cette fameuse séance.....

† H. DE BETHISY, Evêque d'Usès.



## [ N° 15. ]

*Projet de Discours, rédigé par les Ministres,  
et proposé au Roi, le 19 Avril 1791.*

Je viens au milieu de vous avec la confiance que je vous ai toujours témoignée, vous parler des plus pressans intérêts de la Nation. Elle a besoin de respirer enfin à l'abri des loix, et de goûter les bienfaits de l'ordre et de la paix. Je viens vous inviter à resserrer plus étroitement que jamais l'union qui doit régner entre nous, et vous recommander le concours de volontés nécessaires à l'établissement de la constitution. Cette constitution, je l'ai acceptée, je l'ai jurée: je la maintiens. Le désordre en est l'ennemi; je dois le réprimer; sans doute vous redoublez d'efforts pour m'aider dans cette grande entreprise. Les comptes qui me sont rendus chaque jour dans mon conseil, m'avertissent qu'il n'y a plus un moment à perdre: ce que j'ai vu hier ne m'a pas permis d'en douter. Ceux qui essaient de soulever un peuple fidèle, et dont j'ai mérité l'amour par ce que j'ai fait pour lui, cherchent à lui inspirer des doutes sur mes sentimens pour la révolution. Ma conduite toute entière dément assez leurs impostures, et je ne dévierai pas du chemin que je me suis tracé. Je respecte trop la constitution et la déclaration des droits qui en sont la base,



base, pour m'expliquer ici sur mes opinions religieuses. Nul citoyen n'en doit compte à personne, et j'ai la même liberté que les autres citoyens. Mais mon devoir est de maintenir la constitution dans tous ses points ; et la constitution civile du Clergé en est une partie. Je remplirai exactement ce devoir, comme tous ceux que m'impose la royauté. Il est au nombre de ces devoirs de prouver à toute la Nation que je suis libre, et de ne pas laisser subsister à cet égard l'ombre du doute ; rien n'est si important à la validité des sanctions et des acceptations que je donne aux décrets. C'est donc pour rendre ma liberté manifeste à tous les yeux que je ne crois pas devoir céder à la résistance qu'on a apportée hier à mon départ pour Saint-Cloud. Je n'ai pas voulu qu'on la vainquît par la force, parce que j'ai craint de provoquer des actes de rigueur contre une multitude trompée, et qui croit agir en faveur des loix, lorsqu'elle les enfreint toutes. Je persiste donc dans mon projet de voyage pour Saint-Cloud. Si l'on s'y opposoit encore, si les fonctionnaires publics ne parvenoient à vaincre cette opposition, je suis bien sûr que l'Assemblée nationale ne souffriroit pas sous ses yeux une atteinte à ma liberté et une infraction à la constitution.

J'ai voulu vous entretenir de mes intentions et de mes sentimens. Tous mes vœux sont, comme les vôtres, pour le bonheur du peuple, et



ce bonheur ne peut résulter que de l'observation des loix et de l'obéissance à toutes les autorités légitimes et constitutionnelles.

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 16. ]

*Lettre adressée par M. DE MONTMORIN  
à tous les Ambassadeurs.*

Le Roi me charge, Monsieur, de vous mander que son intention la plus formelle est que vous manifestiez ses sentimens sur la Révolution et sur la Constitution française, à la Cour où vous résidez. Les Ambassadeurs et Ministres de France près toutes les Cours de l'Europe, reçoivent les mêmes ordres, afin qu'il ne reste aucun doute ni sur les intentions de Sa Majesté, ni sur l'acceptation libre qu'elle a donnée à la nouvelle forme de gouvernement, ni sur son serment irrévocable de la maintenir. Sa Majesté avoit convoqué les Etats-Généraux de son Royaume, et déterminé dans son Conseil que les Communes y auroient un nombre de députés égal à celui des deux autres ordres qui existoient alors. Cet acte de législation provisoire, que les obstacles du moment ne permettoient pas de rendre plus favorable, annonçoit assez le desir de Sa Majesté de rétablir la Nation dans tous ses droits.



Les Etats-Généraux furent assemblés, et prirent le titre d'Assemblée nationale ; bientôt une constitution, propre à faire le bonheur de la France et du Monarque, remplaça l'ancien ordre de choses où la force apparente de la Royauté ne cachoit que la force réelle des abus de quelques Corps aristocratiques.

L'Assemblée nationale adopta la forme du gouvernement représentatif, joint à la Royauté héréditaire ; le Corps législatif fut déclaré permanent ; l'élection des ministres du culte, des administrateurs et des juges fut rendue au peuple ; on conféra le pouvoir exécutif au Roi, la formation de la loi au Corps législatif, et la sanction au Monarque ; la force publique, soit intérieure, soit extérieure, fut organisée sur les mêmes principes, et d'après la base fondamentale de la distinction des pouvoirs, telle est la nouvelle constitution du Royaume.

Ce que l'on appelle la Révolution, n'est que l'anéantissement d'une foule d'abus accumulés depuis des siècles par l'erreur du peuple, ou le pouvoir des ministres, qui n'a jamais été le pouvoir des Rois ; ces abus n'étoient pas moins funestes à la Nation qu'au Monarque ; ces abus, l'autorité, sous des règnes heureux, n'avoit cessé de les attaquer sans pouvoir les détruire, ils n'existent plus. La Nation souveraine n'a plus que des citoyens égaux en droits, plus de despote que la loi, plus d'organes que des fonctionnaires publics,



et le Roi est le premier de ces fonctionnaires : telle est la Révolution française.

Elle devoit avoir pour ennemis tous ceux qui, dans un premier moment d'erreur, ont regretté, pour des avantages personnels, les abus de l'ancien gouvernement ; de là, l'apparente division qui s'est manifestée dans le Royaume, et qui s'affoiblit chaque jour ; de là, peut-être, quelques loix sévères et de circonstances que le tems corrigera ; mais le Roi, dont la véritable force est indivisible de celle la Nation, qui n'a d'autre ambition que le bonheur du peuple, ni d'autre pouvoir réel que celui qui lui est délégué ; le Roi a dû adopter, sans hésiter, une heureuse constitution qui régénéroit tout à la fois son autorité, la Nation et la Monarchie. On lui a conservé toute sa puissance, hors le pouvoir redoutable de faire des loix ; il est resté chargé des négociations avec les puissances étrangères, du soin de défendre le Royaume, et d'en repousser les ennemis ; mais la Nation française n'en aura plus désormais au dehors, que ses agresseurs : elle n'a plus d'ennemis intérieurs, que ceux qui, se nourrissant encore de folles espérances, croiroient que la volonté de vingt-quatre millions d'hommes rentrés dans leurs droits naturels, après avoir organisé le Royaume de manière qu'il n'existe plus que des souvenirs des anciennes formes et des anciens abus, n'est pas une immuable, une irrévocable constitution.



Les plus dangereux de ces ennemis sont ceux qui ont affecté de répandre des doutes sur les intentions du Monarque ; ces hommes sont bien coupables ou bien aveuglés ; ils se croient les amis du Roi, ce sont les seuls ennemis de la Royauté ; ils auroient privé le Monarque de l'amour et de la confiance d'une grande Nation, si ses principes et sa probité eussent été moins connus. Eh ! que n'a pas fait le Roi, pour montrer qu'il comptoit aussi la Révolution et la Constitution française parmi ses titres à la gloire ! Après avoir accepté et sanctionné toutes les loix, il n'a négligé aucun moyen de les faire exécuter ; dès le mois de Février de l'année dernière, il avoit, dans le sein de l'Assemblée nationale, promis de les maintenir ; il en a fait le serment au milieu de la fédération universelle du Royaume : honoré du titre de restaurateur de la Liberté française, il transmettra plus qu'une couronne à son fils, il lui transmettra une Royauté constitutionnelle.

Les ennemis de la constitution ne cessent de répéter que le Roi n'est pas heureux, comme s'il pouvoit exister pour un Roi d'autre bonheur que celui du peuple ; ils disent que son autorité est avilie, comme si l'autorité, fondée sur la force, n'étoit pas moins puissante et plus incertaine que l'autorité de la loi ; enfin que le Roi n'est pas libre, calomnie atroce, si l'on suppose que sa volonté a pu être forcée ; absurde, si l'on prend pour défaut de liberté le consentement que Sa



Majesté a exprimé plusieurs fois de rester au milieu des citoyens de Paris ; consentement qu'elle devoit accorder à leur patriotisme, même à leurs craintes, et sur-tout à leur amour.

Ces calomnies cependant ont pénétré jusques dans les Cours étrangères ; elles y ont été répétées par des Français, qui se sont volontairement exilés de leur patrie, au lieu d'en partager la gloire, et qui, s'ils n'en sont pas les ennemis, ont au moins abandonné leur poste de citoyen. Le Roi vous charge, Monsieur, de déjouer leurs intrigues et leurs projets. Ces mêmes calomnies, en répandant les idées les plus fausses sur la révolution française, ont fait suspecter chez plusieurs nations voisines les intentions des voyageurs français ; et le Roi vous recommande expressément de les protéger et de les défendre. Donnez, Monsieur, de la constitution française, l'idée que le Roi s'en forme lui-même ; ne laissez aucun doute sur l'intention de Sa Majesté de la maintenir de tout son pouvoir. En assurant la liberté et l'égalité des citoyens, cette constitution fonde la prospérité nationale sur les bases les plus inébranlables ; elle affermit l'autorité royale par les loix ; elle prévient, par une révolution glorieuse, la révolution que les abus de l'ancien gouvernement auroient bientôt fait éclater, en causant, peut-être, la dissolution de l'Empire ; elle fera le bonheur du Roi. Le soin de la justifier, de la



défendre et de la prendre pour règle de votre conduite doit être votre premier devoir.

Je vous ai déjà manifesté plusieurs fois les sentimens de Sa Majesté à cet égard; mais, d'après ce qui lui est revenu de l'opinion qu'on cherchoit à établir dans les pays étrangers, sur ce qui se passe en France, elle m'a ordonné de vous charger de notifier le contenu de cette lettre à la Cour où vous êtes; et, pour lui donner plus de publicité, Sa Majesté vient d'en ordonner l'impression.

*Signé,* MONTMORIN.

Le 23 Avril 1791.

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 17. ]

## MÉMOIRE DU ROI,

*Ou Déclaration de Sa Majesté, adressée à tous les Français à sa sortie de Paris.*

TANT que le Roi a pu espérer de voir renaître l'ordre et le bonheur dans le Royaume, par les moyens employés par l'Assemblée nationale, dans la Capitale, aucun sacrifice personnel ne lui



a coûté ; il n'auroit pas même argué de la nullité dont le défaut absolu de liberté entache toutes les démarches qu'il a faites depuis le mois d'Octobre 1789, si cet espoir eût été rempli : mais aujourd'hui que la seule récompense de tant de sacrifices est de voir la destruction de la royauté, de voir tous les pouvoirs méconnus, les propriétés violées, la sûreté des personnes mise par-tout en danger, les crimes rester impunis, et une anarchie complète s'établir au-dessus des loix, sans que l'apparence d'autorité que lui donne la nouvelle constitution, soit suffisante pour réparer un seul des maux qui affligent le royaume : le Roi, après avoir solennellement protesté contre tous les actes émanés de lui pendant sa captivité, croit devoir mettre sous les yeux des Français et de tout l'univers, le tableau de sa conduite, et celui du gouvernement qui s'est établi dans le Royaume.

“ On a vu Sa Majesté, au mois de Juillet 1789, pour écarter tout sujet de défiance, renvoyer les troupes qu'elle n'avoit appelées auprès de sa personne, qu'après que les étincelles de révolte s'étoient déjà manifestées dans Paris et dans le régiment même de ses gardes. Le Roi, sûr de sa conscience et de la droiture de ses intentions, n'a pas craint de venir seul parmi les citoyens armés de la capitale.

“ Au mois d'Octobre de la même année, le Roi, prévenu depuis long-tems des mouvemens que les factieux cherchoient à exciter, fut, dans



la journée du 5, averti assez à tems pour pouvoir se retirer ou il eût voulu ; mais il craignit qu'on ne se servît de cette démarche pour allumer la guerre civile : et il aima mieux se sacrifier personnellement, et ce qui étoit plus déchirant pour son cœur, mettre en danger la vie des personnes qui lui sont les plus chères. Tout le monde sait les évènements de la nuit du 5 Octobre et l'impunité qui les couvre depuis près de deux ans : Dieu seul a empêché l'exécution des plus grands crimes, et a détourné de la Nation française une tache qui auroit été ineffaçable.

“ Le Roi, cédant au vœu manifesté par l'armée des Parisiens, vint s'établir, avec sa famille, au château des Thuilleries. Il y avoit plus de cent ans que les rois n'y avoient fait de résidence habituelle, excepté pendant la minorité de Louis XV. Rien n'étoit prêt pour recevoir le Roi, et la disposition des appartemens étoit bien loin de procurer les commodités auxquelles Sa Majesté étoit accoutumée dans les autres maisons royales, et dont tout particulier qui a de l'aisance peut jouir. Malgré la contrainte qui avoit été apportée, et les incommodités de tout genre qui suivirent le changement du séjour du Roi, fidèle au système de sacrifices que Sa Majesté s'étoit fait pour procurer la tranquillité publique, elle crut, dès le lendemain de son arrivée à Paris, devoir rassurer les provinces sur son séjour dans la capitale, et inviter l'Assemblée nationale à se rap-



procher de lui, en venant continuer ses travaux dans la même ville.

“ Mais un sacrifice plus pénible étoit réservé au cœur de Sa Majesté ; il fallut qu'on éloignât d'elle ses gardes-du-corps, de la fidélité desquels elle venoit d'avoir une preuve bien éclatante dans la matinée du 6. Deux avoient péri victimes de leur attachement pour le Roi et pour sa famille, et plusieurs encore avoient été blessés grièvement, en exécutant strictement les ordres du Roi, qui leur avoit défendu de tirer sur la multitude égarée. L'art des factieux a été bien grand pour faire envisager sous des couleurs si noires une troupe aussi fidelle, et qui venoit de mettre le comble à la bonne conduite qu'elle avoit toujours tenue. Mais ce n'étoit pas tant contre les gardes-du-corps que leurs intentions étoient dirigées, que contre le Roi lui-même ; on vouloit l'isoler entièrement, en le privant du service de ses gardes-du-corps, dont on avoit pas pu égarer les esprits, comme on avoit réussi auprès de ceux du régiment des Gardes-Françaises, qui, peu de tems auparavant, étoit le modèle de l'armée.

“ C'est aux soldats de ce même régiment, devenus troupes soldées par la ville de Paris, et aux gardes nationaux de cette même ville, que la garde du Roi a été confiée. Ces troupes sont entièrement sous les ordres de la municipalité de Paris, dont le commandant général relève ; le



Roi, gardé ainsi, s'est vu par-là, prisonnier dans ses propres états ; car, comment peut-on appeller autrement l'état d'un Roi qui ne commande que pour les choses de parade, à sa garde ; qui ne nomme à aucune des places, et qui est obligé de se voir entouré de plusieurs personnes dont il connoît les mauvaises intentions pour lui et pour sa famille ? Ce n'est pas pour inculper la garde nationale parisienne et les troupes du centre, que le Roi relève ces faits, c'est pour faire connoître l'exacte vérité ; et en la faisant connoître, il a rendu justice au zèle pour le bon ordre, et à l'attachement pour sa personne qu'en général cette troupe lui a montrés ; lorsque les esprits ont été laissés à eux-mêmes, et qu'ils n'ont pas été égarés par les clameurs et les mensonges des factieux.

“ Mais plus le Roi a fait de sacrifices pour le bonheur de ses peuples, plus les factieux ont travaillé pour en faire méconnoître le prix, et présenter la royauté sous les couleurs les plus fausses et les plus odieuses.

“ La convocation des États-Généraux, le doublement des députés du Tiers-état, les peines que le Roi a prises pour applanir toutes les difficultés qui pouvoient retarder l'Assemblée des États-Généraux, et celles qui s'étoient élevées depuis leur ouverture, tous les retranchemens que le Roi avoit faits sur sa dépense personnelle, tous les sacrifices qu'il a faits à ses peuples dans



la séance du 23 Juin ; enfin la réunion des ordres, opérée par la manifestation du vœu du Roi, mesure que Sa Majesté jugea alors indispensable pour l'activité des Etats-Généraux ; tous ses soins, toutes ses peines, toute sa générosité, tout son dévouement pour son peuple, tout a été méconnu, tout a été dénaturé.

“ Lorsque les États-Généraux s'étant donné le nom d'Assemblée nationale, ont commencé à s'occuper de la constitution du royaume, qu'on se rappelle les mémoires que les factieux ont eu l'adresse de faire venir de plusieurs provinces, et les mouvemens de Paris pour faire manquer les députés à une des clauses portées dans tous les cahiers, qui portoient que *la confection des loix se feroit de concert avec le Roi*. Au mépris de cette clause, l'Assemblée a mis le Roi tout-à-fait hors de la constitution, en lui refusant le droit d'accorder ou de refuser sa sanction aux articles qu'elle regarde comme constitutionnels, en se réservant le droit de ranger dans cette classe ceux qu'elle juge à propos, et en restreignant sur ceux réputés purement législatifs, la prérogative royale à un droit de suspension jusqu'à la troisième législature, droit purement illusoire, comme tant d'exemples ne le prouvent que trop.

“ Que reste-t il au Roi, que le vain simulacre de la royauté ? On lui a donné vingt-cinq millions pour la dépense de sa liste civile ; mais la splendeur de la maison qu'il doit entretenir pour faire



honneur à la dignité de la couronne de France, et les charges qu'on a rejetées dessus, même depuis l'époque où ces fonds ont été réglés, doivent en absorber la totalité.

“ On lui a laissé l'usufruit de quelques-uns des domaines de la couronne, avec plusieurs formes gênantes pour leur jouissance. Ces domaines ne sont qu'une petite partie de ceux que les Rois ont possédés de toute ancienneté, et des patrimoines des ancêtres de Sa Majesté qu'ils ont réunis à la couronne. On ne craint pas d'avancer que, si tous ces objets étoient réunis, ils dépasseroient de beaucoup les sommes allouées pour l'entretien du Roi et de sa famille, et qu'alors il n'en coûteroit rien au peuple pour cette partie.

“ Une remarque qui coûte à faire au Roi, est l'attention qu'on a eue de séparer dans les arrangements sur la finance et sur toutes les autres parties, les services rendus au roi personnellement, ou à l'Etat, et que les services rendus à la personne du Roi ne l'étoient pas aussi à l'Etat.

“ Qu'on examine ensuite les diverses parties du gouvernement. *La justice*; le Roi n'a aucune participation à la confection des loix; il a le simple droit d'empêcher jusqu'à la troisième législature, sur les objets qui ne sont pas réputés constitutionnels, et celui de prier l'Assemblée nationale de s'occuper de tels ou tels objets, sans avoir le droit d'en faire la proposition formelle.



La justice se rend au nom du Roi, les provisions des juges sont expédiées par lui ; mais ce n'est qu'une affaire de forme, et le Roi a seulement la nomination des commissaires du Roi, places nouvellement créées, qui n'ont qu'une partie des attributions des anciens procureurs-généraux, et sont seulement destinées à faire maintenir l'exécution des formes ; toute la partie publique est dévolue à un autre officier de justice. Ces places de commissaires sont à vie et non révocables, pendant que l'exercice de celles de juge ne doit durer que six années. Un des décrets de l'Assemblée vient de priver le Roi d'une des plus belles prérogatives attachées par-tout à la royauté, celle de faire grace et de commuer les peines. Quelque parfaites que soient les loix, il est impossible qu'elles prévoient tous les cas, et ce sera alors les jurés qui auront véritablement le droit de faire grace, en appliquant, suivant leur volonté, le sens de la loi. Combien d'ailleurs cette disposition ne diminue-t-elle pas la Majesté royale aux yeux des peuples, accoutumés depuis si longtemps à recourir au Roi dans leurs besoins et dans leurs peines, et à voir en lui le père commun qui pouvoit soulager leurs afflictions !

“ *L'administration intérieure.* Elle est toute entière dans les mains des départemens, des districts et des municipalités, ressorts trop multipliés, qui nuisent au mouvement de la machine, et souvent peuvent se croiser. Tous ces Corps sont



élus par le peuple, et ne ressortissent du gouvernement, d'après les décrets, que pour leur exécution, ou pour celle des ordres particuliers qui en sont la suite. Ils n'ont, d'un côté, aucune grâce à attendre du gouvernement ; et de l'autre, la manière de punir ou de réprimer leurs fautes telle qu'elle est établie par les décrets, a des formes si compliquées, qu'il faudroit des cas bien extraordinaires pour pouvoir s'en servir : ce qui réduit à bien peu de chose la surveillance que les ministres doivent avoir sur eux. Ces Corps ont d'ailleurs acquis peu de force et de considération. Les sociétés des amis de la constitution ( dont on parlera après ) qui ne sont pas responsables, se trouvent bien plus fortes qu'eux ; et par-là, l'action du gouvernement devient nulle. Depuis leur établissement, on a vu plusieurs exemples, que quelque bonne volonté qu'ils eussent pour maintenir le bon ordre, ils n'ont pas osé se servir des moyens que la loi leur donnoit, par la crainte du peuple, poussé par d'autres instigations.

“ Les Corps électoraux, quoiqu'ils n'aient aucune action par eux-mêmes, et soient restreints aux élections, ont une force réelle par leur masse, par leur durée biennale, et par la crainte naturelle aux hommes, et sur-tout à ceux qui n'ont pas d'état fixe de déplaire à ceux qui peuvent servir ou nuire.

“ La disposition des forces militaires est, par les décrets, dans la main du Roi. Il a été dé-



claré chef suprême de l'armée et de la marine ; mais tout le travail de formation de ces deux armées a été fait par les comités de l'Assemblée, sans la participation du Roi. Tout jusqu'au moindre règlement de discipline, a été fait par eux ; et il reste au Roi le tiers ou le quart des nominations, suivant les occasions ; ce droit devient à-peu-près illusoire, par les obstacles et les contrariétés sans nombre que chacun se permet contre les choix du Roi. On l'a vu obligé de refaire tout le travail des officiers-généraux de l'armée, parce que ces choix déplaisoient aux clubs. En cédant ainsi, Sa Majesté n'a pas voulu livrer d'honnêtes et braves militaires, et les exposer aux violences qui auroient sûrement été exercées contre eux, comme on n'en a vu que trop de fâcheux exemples. Les clubs et les Corps administratifs se mêlent des détails intérieurs des troupes, qui doivent être absolument étrangers à ces derniers, qui n'ont que le droit de requérir la force publique, lorsqu'ils pensent qu'il y a lieu à l'employer. Ils se sont servis de ce droit, quelquefois même pour contrarier les dispositions du gouvernement sur la distribution des troupes : de manière qu'il est arrivé plusieurs fois qu'elles ne se trouvoient pas où elles devoient être. Ce n'est qu'aux clubs que l'on doit attribuer l'esprit de révolte contre les officiers et la discipline militaire, qui se répand dans beaucoup de régimens, et qui, si on n'y met ordre efficacement,



cement, sera la destruction de l'armée. Que devient une armée quand elle n'a plus ni chefs ni discipline ? Au lieu d'être la force et la sauvegarde d'un Etat, elle en devient la terreur et le fléau. Combien les soldats français, quand ils auront les yeux désillés, ne rougiront-ils pas de leur conduite, et ne prendront-ils pas en horreur ceux qui ont perverti le bon esprit qui régnoit dans l'armée et la marine française ? Funestes dispositions que celles qui ont encouragé les soldats et les marins à fréquenter les clubs ! Le Roi a toujours pensé que la loi doit être égale pour tous. Les officiers qui sont dans leur tort doivent être punis ; mais ils doivent l'être, comme les subalternes, suivant les dispositions établies par les loix et réglemens. Toutes les portes doivent être ouvertes pour que le mérite se montre et puisse avancer. Tout le bien-être qu'on peut donner aux soldats est juste et nécessaire ; mais il ne peut y avoir d'armée sans officiers et sans discipline, et il n'y en aura jamais, tant que les soldats se croiront en droit de juger la conduite de leurs chefs.

“ *Affaires étrangères.* La nomination aux places de ministres dans les cours étrangères a été réservée au Roi, ainsi que la conduite des négociations, mais la liberté du Roi pour ces choix est tout aussi nulle que pour ceux des officiers de l'armée : on en a vu l'exemple à la dernière nomination. La révision et la confir-



mation des traités que s'est réservées l'Assemblée nationale, et la nomination d'un comité diplomatique, détruisent absolument la seconde disposition. Le droit de faire la guerre ne seroit qu'un droit illusoire, parce qu'il faudroit être insensé pour qu'un Roi qui n'est ni ne veut être despote, allât, de but en blanc, attaquer un autre Royaume, lorsque le vœu de sa nation s'y opposeroit, et qu'elle n'accorderoit aucun subside pour la soutenir. Mais le droit de faire la paix est d'un tout autre genre. Le Roi, qui ne fait qu'un avec toute la Nation, qui ne peut avoir d'autre intérêt que le sien, connoît ses droits, connoît ses besoins et ses ressources, et ne craint pas alors de prendre les engagements qui lui paroissent propres à assurer son bonheur et sa tranquillité; mais quand il faudra que les conventions subissent la révision et la confirmation de l'Assemblée nationale, aucune puissance ne voudra prendre des engagements qui peuvent être rompus par d'autres que par ceux avec qui elle contracte: et alors tous les pouvoirs se concentrent dans cette Assemblée. *D'ailleurs*, quelque franchise qu'on mette dans les négociations, est-il possible d'en confier le secret à une Assemblée dont les délibérations sont nécessairement publiques ?

“ *Finances.* Le Roi avoit déclaré, bien avant la convocation des Etats-Généraux, qu'il reconnoissoit dans les Assemblées de la Nation le droit d'accorder des subsides; et qu'il ne vouloit plus



imposer les peuples sans leur consentement. Tous les cahiers des députés aux Etats-Généraux s'étoient accordés à mettre le rétablissement des finances au premier rang des objets dont cette Assemblée devoit s'occuper : quelques-uns y avoient mis des restrictions pour des articles à faire décider préalablement. Le Roi a levé les difficultés que ces restrictions auroient pu occasionner, en allant au-devant lui-même, et accordant dans la séance du 23 Juin, tout ce qui avoit été désiré. Le 4 Février 1790, le Roi a prié lui-même l'Assemblée de s'occuper efficacement d'un objet si important : elle ne s'en est occupée que tard, et d'une manière qui peut paroître imparfaite. Il n'y a point encore de tableau exactement fait des recettes et des dépenses, et des ressources qui peuvent combler le déficit : on s'est laissé aller à des calculs hypothétiques. L'Assemblée s'est pressée d'abolir les impôts dont la lourdeur, à la vérité, pesoit beaucoup sur les peuples, mais qui donnoient des ressources assurées ; elle les a remplacés par un impôt presque unique, dont la levée exacte sera peut-être difficile. Les contributions ordinaires sont à présent très-arriérées, et la ressource extraordinaire des douze cents premiers millions d'assignats est presque consommée. Les dépenses des départemens de la guerre et de la marine, au lieu d'être diminuées, sont augmentées, sans y comprendre les dépenses que des armemens nécessaires ont.



occasionnées dans le cours de la dernière année, pour l'administration de ce département : les rouages ont été fort multipliés, en confiant les recettes aux administrations de districts. Le Roi, qui le premier n'avoit pas craint de rendre publics les comptes de son administration des finances, et qui avoit montré la volonté que les comptes publics fussent établis comme une règle du gouvernement, a été rendu, si cela est possible, encore plus étranger à ce département qu'aux autres ; et les préventions, les jalousies et les récriminations contre le gouvernement, ont été encore plus répandues sur cet objet. Le réglemeut des fonds, le recouvrement des impositions, la répartition entre les départemens, les récompenses pour les services rendus, tout a été ôté à l'inspection du Roi : il ne lui reste que quelques serviles nominations, et pas même la distribution de quelques gratifications, pour secourir les indigens. Le Roi connoît les difficultés de cette administration ; et s'il étoit possible que la machine du gouvernement pût aller sans sa surveillance directe sur la gestion des finances, Sa Majesté ne regretteroit que de ne pouvoir plus concourir par elle-même à établir un ordre stable qui pût faire parvenir à la diminution des impositions ( objet qu'on sait bien que Sa Majesté a toujours vivement désiré, et qu'elle eût pu effectuer sans les dépenses de la guerre de l'Amé-



rique ), et de n'avoir plus la distribution de secours pour le soulagement des malheureux.

“ Enfin par les décrets, le Roi a été déclaré chef suprême de l'administration du royaume. D'autres décrets subséquens ont réglé l'organisation du ministère de manière que le Roi, que cela doit regarder plus directement, ne peut pour tant rien y changer sans de nouvelles décisions de l'Assemblée. Le système des chefs du parti dominant a été si bien suivi, de jeter une telle méfiance sur tous les agens du gouvernement, qu'il devient presque impossible aujourd'hui de remplir les places de l'administration. Aucun gouvernement ne peut marcher ni subsister sans une confiance réciproque entre les administrateurs et les administrés ; et les derniers réglemens proposés à l'Assemblée nationale sur les peines à infliger aux ministres ou agens du pouvoir exécutif, qui seroient prévaricateurs, ou seroient jugés avoir dépassé les limites de leur puissance, doivent faire naître toutes sortes d'inquiétudes : ces dispositions pénales s'étendent même jusqu'aux subalternes, ce qui détruit toute subordination, les inférieurs ne devant jamais juger les ordres des supérieurs, qui sont responsables de ce qu'ils commandent. Ces réglemens, pour la multiplicité des précautions et des genres de délits qui y sont indiqués, ne tendent qu'à inspirer de la méfiance, au lieu de la confiance qui seroit si nécessaire.



“ Cette forme de gouvernement, si vicieuse en elle-même, le devient encore plus par ses conséquences.

“ 1<sup>o</sup>. L'Assemblée par le moyen de ses comités, excède à tout moment les bornes qu'elle s'est prescrites ; elle s'occupe d'affaires qui tiennent uniquement à l'administration intérieure du Royaume et à celle de la justice, et cumule ainsi tous les pouvoirs : elle exerce même par son comité des recherches un véritable despotisme plus barbare et plus insupportable qu'aucun de ceux dont l'histoire ait jamais fait mention.

2<sup>o</sup>. Il s'est établi dans presque toutes les villes et même dans plusieurs bourgs et villages du Royaume, des associations connues sous le nom des amis de la constitution : contre la teneur des décrets, elles n'en souffrent aucune qui ne soit affiliée avec elles ; ce qui forme une immense corporation plus dangereuse qu'aucune de celles qui existoient auparavant. Sans y être autorisées, mais même au mépris de tous les décrets, elles délibèrent sur toutes les parties du gouvernement, correspondent entre elles sur tous les objets, font et reçoivent des dénonciations, affichent des arrêtés, et ont pris une telle prépondérance, que tous les corps administratifs et judiciaires, sans en excepter l'Assemblée nationale elle-même, obéissent presque tous à leurs ordres.

“ Le Roi ne pense pas qu'il soit possible de gouverner un Royaume d'une si grande étendue



et d'une si grande importance que la France, par les moyens établis par l'Assemblée nationale, tels qu'ils existent à présent. Sa Majesté, en accordant à tous les décrets indistinctement une sanction qu'elle savoit bien ne pas pouvoir refuser, y a été déterminée par le désir d'éviter toute discussion que l'expérience lui avoit appris être au moins inutile; elle craignoit de plus qu'on ne pensât qu'elle voulût retarder ou faire manquer les travaux de l'Assemblée nationale, à la réussite desquels la Nation prenoit un si grand intérêt : elle mettoit sa confiance dans les gens sages de cette Assemblée qui reconnoissoient qu'il est plus aisé de détruire un gouvernement, que d'en construire un sur des bases toutes différentes. Ils avoient plusieurs fois senti la nécessité, lors de la révision annoncée des décrets, de donner une force d'action et de réaction nécessaire à tout gouvernement : ils reconnoissoient aussi l'utilité, d'inspirer pour ce gouvernement et pour les loix qui doivent assurer la prospérité et l'état de chacun, une confiance telle qu'elle ramenât dans le Royaume tous les citoyens que le mécontentement dans quelques-uns, et dans la plupart la crainte pour leur vie ou pour leurs propriétés, ont forcé de s'expatrier.

“ Mais plus on voit l'Assemblée s'approcher du terme de ses travaux, plus on voit les gens sages perdre leur crédit, plus les dispositions qui ne peuvent mettre que de la difficulté, et même



de l'impossibilité, dans la conduite du gouvernement, et inspirer pour lui de la méfiance et de la fureur, augmentent tous les jours; les autres réglemens, au lieu de jeter un baume salulaire sur les plaies qui saignent encore dans plusieurs provinces, ne font qu'accroître les inquiétudes et aigrir les mécontentemens. L'esprit des clubs domine et envahit tout: les mille journaux et pamphlets calomniateurs, incendiaires, qui se répandent journellement, ne sont que leurs échos, et préparent les esprits de la manière dont ils veulent les conduire; jamais l'Assemblée nationale n'a osé remédier à cette licence, bien éloignée d'une vraie liberté; elle a perdu son crédit, et même la force dont elle auroit besoin pour revenir sur ses pas, et changer ce qui lui paroîtroit bon à être corrigé. On voit par l'esprit qui règne dans les clubs et la manière dont ils s'emparent des nouvelles assemblées primaires, ce qu'on doit attendre d'eux; et s'ils laissent appercevoir quelques dispositions à revenir sur quelque chose, c'est pour détruire les restes de la royauté et établir un gouvernement métaphysique et philosophique, impossible dans son exécution.

“ Français, est-ce là ce que vous entendiez en envoyant des représentans à l'Assemblée nationale? Désiriez-vous que l'anarchie et le despotisme des clubs remplaçassent le gouvernement monarchique, sous lequel la Nation a prospéré pendant quatorze cents ans? Désiriez-vous voir



votre Roi comblé d'outrages et privé de sa liberté, pendant qu'il ne s'occupoit que d'établir la vôtre?

“ L'amour pour leurs Rois est une des vertus des Français, et Sa Majesté en a reçu personnellement des marques trop touchantes pour pouvoir jamais les oublier. Les factieux sentoient bien que tant que cet amour subsisteroit, leur ouvrage ne pourroit jamais s'achever; ils sentoient également que pour l'affoiblir, il falloit, s'il étoit possible, anéantir le respect qui l'a toujours accompagné, et c'est la source des outrages que le Roi a reçus depuis deux ans, et de tous les maux qu'il a soufferts. Sa Majesté n'en traceroit pas ici l'affligeant tableau, si elle ne vouloit faire connoître à ses fidèles sujets l'esprit de ces factieux qui déchirent le sein de leur patrie, en feignant de vouloir la régénérer.

“ Ils profitèrent d'abord de l'espèce d'enthousiasme où l'on étoit pour M. Necker, pour lui procurer, sous les yeux même du Roi, un triomphe d'autant plus éclatant, que dans le même instant les gens qu'ils avoient soudoyés pour cela, affectèrent de ne faire aucune attention à la présence du Roi. Enhardis par ce premier essai, ils osèrent, dès le lendemain à Versailles, faire insulter Mr. l'Archevêque de Paris, le poursuivre à coups de pierres, et mettre sa vie dans le plus grand danger. Lorsque l'insurrection éclata dans Paris un courier que le Roi avoit envoyé, fut arrêté publiquement, fouillé, et les let-



tres du Roi même furent ouvertes. Pendant ce tems l'Assemblée nationale sembloit insulter à la douleur de Sa Majesté, en ne s'occupant qu'à combler de marques d'estime ces mêmes ministres dont le renvoi a servi de prétexte à l'insurrection, et que depuis elle n'a pas mieux traités pour cela. Le roi s'étant déterminé à aller porter lui-même des paroles de paix dans la capitale, des gens apostés sur la route eurent grand soin d'empêcher ces cris de *vive le Roi*, si naturels aux Français; et les harangues qu'on lui fit, loin de porter l'expression de la reconnaissance, ne furent remplies que d'une ironie amère.

“ Cependant l'on accoutumoit de plus en plus le peuple au mépris de la royauté et des loix : celui de Versailles essayoit de pendre deux hussards à la grille du château, arrachoit un parricide au supplice, s'opposoit à l'envoi d'un détachement de chasseurs, destinés à maintenir le bon ordre, tandis qu'un énergumène faisoit publiquement au Palais-Royal la motion de venir enlever le Roi et son fils, de les garder à Paris, et d'enfermer la Reine dans un couvent, et que cette motion, au lieu d'être rejetée avec l'indignation qu'elle auroit dû exciter, étoit applaudie. L'Assemblée, de son côté, non contente de dégrader la royauté, par ses décrets, affectoit même du mépris pour la personne du Roi, et recevoit d'une manière impossible à qualifier convenablement,



les observations du Roi sur les décrets de la nuit des 4 et 5 Août.

“ Enfin arrivèrent les journées des 5 et 6 Octobre ; le récit en seroit superflu, et Sa Majesté l'épargne à ses fidèles sujets, mais elle ne peut pas s'empêcher de faire remarquer la conduite de l'Assemblée pendant ces horribles scènes. Loin de songer à les prévenir ou du moins à les arrêter, elle resta tranquille, et se contenta de répondre à la motion de se transporter en corps chez le Roi, que cela n'étoit pas de sa dignité.

“ Depuis ce moment, presque tous les jours ont été marqués par de nouvelles scènes plus affligeantes les unes que les autres pour le Roi, ou par de nouvelles insultes qui lui ont été faites. A peine le Roi étoit-il aux Tuileries, qu'un innocent fut massacré et sa tête promenée dans Paris, presque sous les yeux du Roi. Dans plusieurs provinces ceux qui paroissent attachés au Roi ou à sa personne, ont été persécutés ; plusieurs même ont perdu la vie, sans qu'il ait été possible au Roi de faire punir les assassins, ou même d'en témoigner sa sensibilité. Dans le jardin même des Tuileries, tous les députés qui ont parlé contre la royauté ou contre la Religion ( car les factieux, dans leur rage, n'ont pas plus respecté l'Autel que le Trône ), ont reçu les honneurs du triomphe, pendant que ceux qui pensent différemment, y sont à tout moment insultés, et leur vie même est continuellement menacée.



“ A la fédération du 14 Juillet 1790, l'Assemblée, en nommant le Roi, par un décret spécial, pour en être le chef, s'est montrée par-là penser qu'elle auroit pu en nommer un autre. A cette même cérémonie, malgré la demande du Roi, la famille royale a été placée dans un endroit séparé de celui qu'il occupoit: chose inouïe jusqu'à présent. ( C'est pendant cette fédération que le Roi a passé les momens les plus doux de son séjour à Paris. Il s'arrête avec complaisance sur le souvenir des témoignages d'attachement et d'amour que lui ont donnés les gardes nationaux de toute la France, rassemblés pour cette cérémonie ).

“ Les ministres du Roi, ces mêmes ministres que l'Assemblée avoit forcé le Roi de rappeler, ou dont elle avoit applaudi la nomination, ont été contraints, à force d'insultes et de menaces, à quitter leurs places, excepté un.

“ Mesdames, tantes du Roi, et qui étoient restées constamment près de lui, déterminées par un motif de religion, ayant voulu se rendre à Rome, les factieux n'ont pas voulu leur laisser même la liberté qui appartient à toute personne, et qui est établie par la déclaration des droits de l'homme. Une troupe, poussée par eux, s'est portée vers Bellevue pour arrêter Mesdames. Le coup ayant été manqué par leur prompt départ, les factieux ne se sont pas déconcertés ; ils se sont portés chez MONSIEUR, sous prétexte qu'il



vouloit suivre Mesdames ; et quoiqu'ils n'aient recueilli de cette démarche que le plaisir de lui faire une insulte, elle n'a pas été tout-à-fait perdue pour leur système. Cependant, n'ayant pu faire arrêter Mesdames à Bellevue, ils ont trouvé le moyen de les faire arrêter à Arnai-le-Duc ; et il a fallu des ordres de l'Assemblée nationale pour leur laisser continuer leur route, ceux du Roi ayant été méprisés.

“A peine la nouvelle de cette arrestation fut-elle arrivée à Paris, qu'ils ont essayé de faire approuver par l'Assemblée nationale, cette violation de liberté ; mais leur coup ayant été manqué, ils ont excité un soulèvement pour contraindre le Roi à faire revenir Mesdames ; mais la bonne conduite de la garde nationale ( dont le Roi s'est empressé de témoigner sa satisfaction ) ayant dissipé l'attroupement, ils eurent recours à d'autres moyens. Il ne leur avoit pas été difficile d'observer qu'au moindre mouvement qui se faisoit sentir, une grande quantité de fidèles sujets se rendoient aux tribunes des Tuileries, et formoient un espèce de bataillon capable d'en imposer aux mal-intentionnés ; ils excitèrent une émeute à Vincennes, et firent courir à dessein, le bruit qu'on se serviroit de cette occasion pour se porter aux Tuileries, afin que les défenseurs du Roi pussent se rassembler comme ils l'avoient déjà fait, et qu'on pût dénaturer leurs intentions aux yeux de la garde nationale, en leur prêtant le projet des for-



faits même contre lesquels ils s'armoient. Ils réussirent si bien à aigrir les esprits, que le Roi eut la douleur de voir maltraiter sous ses yeux, sans pouvoir les défendre, ceux qui lui donnoient les plus touchantes preuves de leur attachement. Ce fut en vain que Sa Majesté leur demanda elle-même les armes qu'on avoit rendues suspectes. Ce fut en vain qu'ils lui donnèrent cette dernière marque de leur dévouement ; rien ne put retenir ces esprits égarés, qui poussèrent l'audace jusqu'à se faire livrer, et briser même ces armes, dont le Roi s'étoit rendu dépositaire.

“ Cependant le Roi, après avoir été malade, se disposoit à profiter des beaux jours du printemps pour aller à Saint-Cloud, comme il y avoit été, l'année dernière, une partie de l'été et de l'automne. Comme ce voyage tomboit dans la Semaine-Sainte, on osa se servir de l'attachement connu du Roi pour la Religion de ses pères, pour animer les esprits contre lui ; et dès le Dimanche au soir, le club des cordeliers fit afficher un arrêté, dans lequel le Roi lui même étoit dénoncé comme réfractaire à la loi. Le lendemain, Sa Majesté monte en voiture, pour partir ; mais arrivée aux Tuileries, une foule de peuple parut vouloir s'opposer à son passage ; et c'est avec bien de la peine qu'on doit dire ici, que la garde nationale, loin de réprimer les séditieux, se joignit à eux, et arrêta elle-même les chevaux. En vain Mr.



de la Fayette fit-il tout ce qu'il put pour faire comprendre à cette garde l'horreur de la conduite qu'elle tenoit, rien ne put réussir; les discours les plus insolens, les motions les plus abominables retentissoient aux oreilles de Sa Majesté; les personnes de sa maison qui se trouvoient là, s'empressèrent de lui faire un rempart de leur corps, si les intentions qu'on ne manifestoit que trop, venoient à s'exécuter; mais il falloit que le Roi bût le calice jusqu'à la lie; ses fidèles serviteurs lui furent arrachés avec violence; enfin, après avoir enduré pendant une heure trois quarts tous ces outrages, Sa Majesté fut contrainte de rester dans sa prison; car, après cela, on ne sauroit appeler cela un palais. Son premier soin fut d'envoyer chercher le directoire du département, chargé par état de veiller à la tranquillité et à la sûreté publique, et de l'instruire de ce qui venoit de se passer. Le lendemain, S. M. rendit elle-même à l'Assemblée nationale pour lui faire sentir combien cet évènement étoit contraire même à la nouvelle constitution; de nouvelles insultes furent le fruit que le Roi retira de ces démarches. Il fut obligé de consentir à l'éloignement de sa chapelle et de la plupart de ses grands officiers, et d'approuver la lettre que son ministre a écrite en son nom aux cours étrangères; enfin d'assister, le jour de Pâques, à la Messe du nouveau curé de St. Germain-l'Auxerrois.

“ D'après tous ces motifs de l'impossibilité où



le Roi se trouve d'opérer le bien, et d'empêcher le mal qui se commet, est-il étonnant que le Roi ait cherché à recouvrer sa liberté et à se mettre en sûreté avec sa famille ?

Français, et vous sur-tout Parisiens, vous habitans d'une ville que les ancêtres de Sa Majesté se plaisoient à appeler *leur bonne ville de Paris*, méfiez-vous des suggestions et des mensonges de vos faux amis ; revenez à votre Roi ; il sera toujours votre père, votre meilleur ami ; quel plaisir n'aura-t-il pas à oublier toutes ses injures personnelles, et de se voir au milieu de vous, lorsqu'une constitution, qu'il aura acceptée librement, fera que notre sainte Religion sera respectée, que le gouvernement sera établi sur un pied stable, et que par son action, les biens et l'état de chacun ne seront plus troublés, que les loix ne seront plus enfreintes impunément, et qu'enfin la liberté sera posée sur des bases fermes et inébranlables. ”

*Signé, LOUIS.*

A Paris, le 20 Juin 1791.

“ Le Roi défend à ses ministres de signer aucun ordre en son nom, jusqu'à ce qu'ils aient reçu ses ordres ultérieurs ; il enjoint à son garde du sceau de l'État, de le lui renvoyer d'abord qu'il en sera requis de sa part. ”

*Signé, LOUIS.*

A Paris, le 20 Juin 1791.



[ N<sup>o</sup>. 18. ]

*Adresse de l'Assemblée nationale aux Français,  
à l'occasion du départ du Roi, et en réponse  
à la déclaration de Sa Majesté.*

Le 23 Juin 1791.

“ Un grand attentat vient de se commettre....  
L'Assemblée nationale touchoit au terme de ses  
longs travaux ; la Constitution étoit finie ; les  
orages de la révolution alloient cesser, et les en-  
nemis du bien public ont voulu, par un seul for-  
fait, immoler la Nation entière à leur vengeance.  
Le Roi et la Famille royale ont été enlevés dans  
la nuit du 20 au 21 de ce mois. ”

“ Vos Représentans triompheront de cet obs-  
tacle, ils mesureront l'étendue des devoirs qui  
leur sont imposés. La liberté publique sera  
maintenue ; les conspirateurs et les esclaves ap-  
prendront à connoître l'intrépidité des fondateurs  
de la liberté française, et nous prenons à la face  
de la Nation, l'engagement solennel de venger  
la loi ou de mourir. ”

“ La France veut être libre, et elle sera libre.  
On cherche à faire rétrograder la révolution, la  
révolution ne rétrogradera point. Français, telle  
est votre volonté : elle sera accomplie. ”

“ Il s'agissoit d'abord d'appliquer la loi à la



position momentanée où se trouve le royaume. Le Roi, dans la Constitution, exerce les fonctions royales du refus ou de la sanction, sur les décrets du Corps législatif; il est en outre chef du pouvoir exécutif; et en cette dernière qualité, il fait exécuter la loi par des ministres responsables. Si le premier des fonctionnaires publics déserte son poste, ou est enlevé malgré lui, les Représentans de la Nation revêtus de tous les pouvoirs nécessaires au salut de l'État et à l'activité du gouvernement, ont le droit d'y suppléer. En prononçant que l'apposition du sceau de l'État, et la signature du ministre de la justice, donneront aux décrets le caractère et l'autorité de la loi, l'Assemblée nationale *constituante* a exercé un droit incontestable. Sous le second rapport il n'étoit pas moins facile de trouver un supplément. En effet, aucun ordre du Roi ne pouvant être exécuté, s'il n'est contresigné par les ministres, qui, en demeurent responsables, il a suffi d'une simple déclaration qui ordonnât provisoirement aux ministres d'agir sous leur responsabilité, sans la signature du Roi. ”

“ Après avoir pourvu aux moyens de compléter et de faire exécuter la loi, les dangers de la crise sont écartés à l'égard de l'intérieur du royaume. Contre les attaques du dehors on vient de donner à l'armée un premier renfort de quatre cents mille gardes nationales. Au dedans et au dehors, la France a donc toutes sortes de motifs



de sécurité, si les esprits ne se laissent point frapper d'étonnement, s'ils gardent de la modération. L'Assemblée nationale constituante est en place. Tous les pouvoirs publics établis par la constitution sont en activité ; le patriotisme des citoyens de Paris, sa garde nationale, dont le zèle est au dessus de tout éloge, veillent au tour de vos Représentans. Les citoyens actifs du royaume entier sont enrôlés, et la France peut attendre ses ennemis. ”

“ Faut-il craindre les suites d'un écrit arraché avant le départ de ce Roi séduit, que nous ne croirons inexcusable qu'à la dernière extrémité ? On conçoit à peine l'ignorance et les prétentions de ceux qui l'ont dicté ; il sera discuté par la suite avec plus d'étendue, si vos intérêts l'exigent ; mais il est de notre devoir d'en donner ici une idée. ”

“ L'Assemblée nationale a fait une proclamation solennelle des vérités politiques ; elle a retrouvé, ou plutôt elle a rétabli les droits sacrés du genre humain ; et cet écrit présente de nouveau la théorie de l'esclavage ! ”

“ Français ! on y rappelle cette journée du 23 Juin, où le chef du pouvoir exécutif, où le premier des fonctionnaires publics osa dicter ses volontés absolues à vos Représentans, chargés par vos ordres de refaire la constitution du royaume. ”

“ On ne craint pas d'y parler de cette armée



qui menaçoit l'Assemblée nationale au mois de Juillet ; on ose se faire un mérite de l'avoir éloignée des délibérations de vos Représentans. ”

“ L'Assemblée nationale a gémi des évènements du 6 Octobre. Elle a ordonné la poursuite des coupables ; et parce qu'il est difficile de retrouver quelques brigands au milieu de l'insurrection de tout un peuple, on lui reproche de les laisser impunis ! On se garde bien de raconter les outrages qui provoquèrent ces désordres. La Nation étoit plus juste et plus généreuse, elle ne reprochoit plus au Roi les violences exercées sous son règne, et sous le règne de ses ayeux. ”

“ On ose y rappeler la fédération du 14 Juillet de l'année dernière. Qu'en est-il resté dans la mémoire des auteurs de cet écrit ? C'est que le premier fonctionnaire public n'étoit placé qu'à la tête des Représentans de la Nation. Au milieu de tous les députés, des gardes nationales, et des troupes de ligne du Royaume, il y prononça un serment solennel ; et c'est là ce qu'on oublie, le serment du Roi fut libre ; car il dit lui-même, que, *c'est pendant la fédération qu'il a passé les momens les plus doux de son séjour à Paris ; qu'il s'arrête avec complaisance sur le souvenir des témoignages d'attachement et d'amour que lui ont donné les gardes nationaux de toute la France.* Si un jour le Roi ne déclaroit pas que des factieux l'ont entraîné, on auroit dénoncé son parjure au monde entier. ”



“ Est-il besoin de parcourir tant d'autres reproches si mal fondés ? On diroit que les peuples sont faits pour les Rois, et que la clémence est l'unique devoir de ceux-ci ; qu'une grande Nation doit se régénérer sans aucune agitation, sans troubler un moment les plaisirs des Rois et de leur Cour ; quelques désordres ont accompagné la révolution ; mais l'ancien despotisme doit-il se plaindre des maux qu'il avoit faits ? et convient-il de s'étonner que le peuple n'ait pas toujours gardé la mesure, en dissipant cet amas de corruption formé pendant des siècles par les crimes du pouvoir absolu ? ”

“ Des adresses de félicitations et de remerciemens sont arrivées de toutes les parties du royaume ; on dit que c'est l'ouvrage des factieux, oui sans doute de vingt-quatre millions de factieux. ”

“ Il falloit reconstituer tous les pouvoirs ; parce que tout étoit corrompu , parce qu'une dette effrayante, accumulée par l'impéritie et les désordres du gouvernement alloit précipiter la Nation dans un abîme. On nous reproche de n'avoir pas soumis la constitution au refus du Roi ; mais la royauté n'est établie que pour le peuple, et si les grandes nations sont obligées de la maintenir, c'est parce qu'elle est la sauve-garde de leur bonheur. La constitution lui laisse sa prérogative et son véritable caractère. Vos Représentans seroient criminels, s'ils avoient sacrifié



vingt-quatre millions de citoyens à l'intérêt d'un seul homme. ”

“ Le travail des peuples alimente le trésor de l'État ; c'est un dépôt sacré. Le premier symptôme de l'esclavage est de ne voir dans les contributions publiques, qu'une dette envers le despotisme. La France devoit être, sur ce point, plus sévère qu'aucune autre nation. On a réglé l'emploi des contributions d'après la stricte justice. On a pourvu avec munificence aux dépenses du Roi ; par une condescendance de l'Assemblée nationale, il en a lui-même fixé la somme ; et près de 30 millions accordés à la liste civile, sont présentés comme une somme trop modique. ”

“ Le décret sur la guerre et la paix ôte au Roi et à ses ministres le droit de dévouer les peuples au carnage, selon le caprice ou les calculs de la Cour ; Et l'on paroît le regretter ! Des traités désastreux ont tour à tour sacrifié le territoire de l'Empire français, les trésors de l'État, et l'industrie des citoyens. Le Corps législatif connoîtra mieux les intérêts de la Nation, et l'on nous reproche de lui avoir conservé la révision et la confirmation des traités ! Quoi donc ! N'avez-vous pas fait une assez longue expérience des erreurs du gouvernement ? ”

“ Sous l'ancien régime l'avancement et la discipline des soldats et des officiers de terre et de mer étoient abandonnés au caprice du ministère.



L'Assemblée nationale, occupée de leur bonheur, leur a restitué des droits qui leur appartiennent ; l'autorité royale n'aura plus que le tiers ou le quart des places à donner, et l'on ne trouve point cette part suffisante ! ”

“ On attaque votre ordre judiciaire, sans songer que le Roi d'un grand peuple ne doit se mêler de l'administration de la justice que pour faire observer les loix et exécuter les jugemens. On veut exciter des regrets sur le droit de faire grace et de commuer les peines, et cependant tout le monde sait comment ce droit est exercé, et sur qui les monarques répandent de pareilles faveurs.”

“ Se plaindre de ne pouvoir plus ordonner toutes les parties de l'Administration, c'est revendiquer le despotisme ministériel. Certes le Roi ne pouvoit l'exercer lui-même. On a laissé au peuple le choix de ses administrateurs ; mais ces même administrateurs sont sous l'autorité du Roi, en tout ce qui ne concerne pas la répartition de l'impôt ; il peut sous la responsabilité de ses ministres, annuler leurs actes irréguliers, les suspendre de leurs fonctions. ”

“ Les pouvoirs une fois répartis, le corps législatif, comme tout autre pouvoir public, ne pourra sortir des bornes qui lui sont assignées. Au défaut des ministres, l'impérieuse nécessité a forcé quelquefois l'Assemblée nationale à se mêler malgré elle de l'administration. Ce n'est pas au gouvernement à le lui reprocher. On doit le



dire, il n'inspiroit plus de confiance, et tandis que tous les Français se portoient vers le Corps législatif comme centre d'action, l'Assemblée ne s'est jamais occupée sur ce point, que des dispositions nécessaires au maintien de la liberté. Devoit-elle conserver de la confiance ? Vous pouvez en juger d'après le départ du Roi. ”

“ La faction qui à la suite de ce départ a tracé la longue liste de reproches auxquels il sera si facile de répondre, s'est démasquée elle-même. Des imputations souvent renouvelées en décèlent la source. On se plaint de la complication du nouveau régime, et par une contradiction sensible, on se plaint en même tems de la durée biennale des fonctions des électeurs. On reproche amèrement aux sociétés des amis de la constitution cet amour ardent de la liberté qui a tant servi la révolution et qui peut être si utile encore, si dans les circonstances actuelles il est dirigé par un patriotisme tout à la fois prudent et éclairé. ”

“ Faut-il parler enfin de cette insinuation relative à la Religion catholique ? L'Assemblée nationale, vous le savez, n'a fait qu'user des droits de la puissance civile ; elle a rétabli la pureté des premiers siècles chrétiens, et ce ne sont pas les intérêts du Ciel qui dictent ce reproche. ”

“ Français ! l'absence du Roi n'arrêtera point l'activité du gouvernement, et un seul danger réel vous menace. Vous avez à vous prémunir



contre la suspension des travaux de l'industrie, du paiement des contributions publiques, contre cette agitation sans mesure, qui, bouleverseroit l'Etat par excès de patriotisme, où l'instigation de nos ennemis, commenceroit par l'anarchie, et finiroit par la guerre civile. ”

“ C'est sur ce danger que l'Assemblée nationale appelle la sollicitude de tous les bons citoyens ; c'est ce malheur véritable qu'il faut éviter. Vos représentans vous exhortent au nom de la patrie, au nom de la liberté, à ne pas le perdre de vue. Dans les momens de crise il est nécessaire de développer un grand caractère ; c'est alors que les haines privées et les intérêts particuliers doivent disparaître, le peuple qui vient de reconquérir sa liberté, doit sur-tout montrer cette fermeté tranquille qui doit faire pâlir les tyrans. ”

“ Le grand, presque l'unique intérêt qui doit nous occuper particulièrement jusqu'à l'époque très-prochaine où l'Assemblée nationale aura pris une résolution définitive, c'est le maintien de l'ordre. L'ordre peut exister par-tout où il existe un centre d'autorité ; il se trouve dans l'Assemblée de vos représentans. Il suffira provisoirement, si la voix des citoyens prononce avec énergie l'obligation de respecter la loi ; si la force publique de l'armée, des gardes nationales, et de tous les Français en appuie l'exécution. Nous gémirons des malheurs de notre Roi ; nous appellerons la vengeance des loix sur ceux qui l'ont entraîné



loin de son poste ; mais l'empire ne sera point ébranlé ; l'activité de l'administration et de la justice ne sera point ralentie. Ralliez-vous donc sur ce point, auquel le salut de la France est attaché ; surveillez ces hommes qui ne voient dans les calamités publiques qu'une occasion favorable à leur brigandage. Unissez vos efforts pour empêcher les violences, pour assurer les contributions, et la libre circulation des subsistances, pour maintenir la sûreté des personnes et de toutes les propriétés. Montrez la loi aux coupables ; fortifiez les autorités constitutionnelles de toute la puissance de la volonté générale ; que les factieux qui demandent le sang de leurs concitoyens voient l'ordre se maintenir au milieu des orages, la constitution s'affermir et devenir plus chère aux Français par les coups qu'ils lui portent ; qu'enfin les dangers qui vous étoient réservés, n'atteignent que les ennemis de votre bonheur. La capitale peut servir de modèle au reste de la France ; le départ du Roi n'a point causé d'agitation ; et, ce qui fait le désespoir de nos ennemis, elle jouit d'une tranquillité parfaite."

" Il est envers les grandes nations des attentats que la générosité seule peut faire oublier. Le peuple français étoit fier dans la servitude ; il montre les vertus et l'héroïsme de la liberté, que les ennemis de la constitution le sachent ; pour asservir de nouveau le territoire de cet em-



pire, il faudroit anéantir la Nation. Le despotisme formera, s'il le veut, une pareille entreprise, il sera vaincu ; ou, à la suite de son affreux triomphe, il ne trouvera que des ruines. ”

*Signés, Alexandre BEAUHARNAIS, président ;  
MAURIET, REGNIER, LE CARLIER, FRICAUD,  
GRENOT, MERLE Secrétaires.*

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 19. ]

*Extrait du Récit fait par DROUET à l'Assemblée dans la séance du 24 Juin 1791.*

Je suis maître de poste à Sainte-Menehould, ancien dragon au régiment de Condé ; mon camarade Guillaume est un ancien dragon au régiment de la Reine. Le 21 Juin, à 7 heures et demie du soir, deux voitures et onze chevaux relaièrent à la poste de Sainte-Menehould. Je crus reconnoître la Reine, et appercevant un homme dans le fond de la voiture à gauche, je fus frappé de la ressemblance de sa phisionomie avec l'effigie d'un assignat de 50 livres. Ces voitures étant couduites par un détachement de dragons, lequel succédoit à un détachement de hussards, sous le prétexte de protéger un trésor, cette escorte me confirma dans mes soupçons, sur-tout lorsque je vis le commandant de ce détachement parler d'un air très-animé à l'un des



couriers. Cependant, craignant d'exciter de fausses alarmes, étant tout seul, ne pouvant consulter personne, je laissai partir les voitures; mais voyant aussitôt les dragons prêts à se mettre en mouvement pour les suivre, et voyant qu'après avoir demandé des chevaux pour Verdun, ces voitures prenoient la route de Varennes, je pris un chemin de traverse pour les rejoindre. Je les devançai à Varennes; il étoit onze heures du soir, il faisoit très-noir; tout le monde étoit couché. Les voitures furent arrêtées dans une rue par une dispute qui eut lieu entre les postillons et le maître de poste du lieu. Celui-ci vouloit qu'on fit reposer et rafraîchir les chevaux, selon l'usage; le Roi au contraire vouloit accélérer son départ. Je dis alors à mon camarade—Es-tu bon patriote?—N'en doute pas.—Eh bien, lui répondis-je, le Roi est à Varennes; il faut l'arrêter.—Alors nous descendîmes, et nous fîmes réflexion que pour le succès de notre projet, il falloit barricader la rue et le pont par où le Roi devoit passer.

En conséquence, nous nous transportâmes, moi et mon camarade près du pont de Varennes; il y avoit heureusement tout près une voiture chargée de meubles, nous l'amenâmes, et la culbutâmes, de manière qu'il étoit impossible de passer. Alors, nous courûmes chercher le procureur de la Commune, le maire, le commandant de la garde nationale, et en moins d'un demi quart d'heure nous fûmes réunis au nombre de 8 hom-



mes de bonne volonté. Le commandant de la garde nationale, accompagné du procureur de la Commune s'approchèrent de la voiture et demandèrent aux voyageurs qui ils étoient, et où ils alloient. La Reine répondit, qu'ils étoient pressés. On insista pour avoir un passeport ; elle donna enfin son passeport à deux gardes d'honneur, qui descendirent et vinrent à l'auberge. Ce passeport portoit le nom de madame la baronne de Corff, &c. Quelques personnes qui entendirent la lecture de ce passeport disoient qu'il devoit suffire. Nous combattîmes cette idée, parce que le passeport n'étoit signé que du Roi, et qu'il devoit l'être aussi par le président de l'Assemblée nationale. Si vous êtes une étrangère, disions-nous à la Reine, pourquoi avez vous assez d'influence pour faire partir après vous un détachement ? Pourquoi, lorsque vous passâtes par Clermont, en avez-vous eu assez pour vous faire suivre par un premier détachement ? D'après ces réflexions et notre obstination, on délibéra que les voyageurs ne partiroient que le lendemain. Ils descendirent dans la maison du procureur de la Commune.

Alors, de lui-même, le Roi nous dit. Voilà le Roi, voilà mon épouse et mes enfans ; nous vous conjurons de nous traiter avec les égards que les Français ont toujours eu pour leurs Rois. Aussitôt les gardes nationales accoururent en foule, et l'on vit en même tems arriver les hus-



sards le sabre à la main ; ils essayèrent d'approcher de la maison où étoit le Roi ; mais nous leur criâmes que si on vouloit l'arracher, on ne l'arracheroit que mort d'entre nos mains. . . . . Le commandant de la garde nationale eut l'attention en outre de faire venir deux petites pièces d'artillerie qu'il fit mettre à l'embouchure de la rue par en haut, et deux autres en bas, de manière que les hussards se trouvèrent entre deux feux. On les somma de descendre de cheval. M. Goguelas s'y refusa : il dit qu'il vouloit avec sa troupe garder le Roi : on lui répondit que la garde nationale le garderoit bien, qu'elle n'avoit pas besoin de son secours ; il insista, alors le commandant de la garde nationale ordonna aux canoniers de se mettre à leurs rangs et de faire feu, ils prirent la mèche à la main.... Mais j'ai l'honneur de vous observer qu'il n'y avoit rien dans les canons.

En un mot le commandant de la garde nationale et la garde nationale firent si bien qu'ils parvinrent à désarmer les hussards ; le Roi fut donc constitué prisonnier. Ayant ainsi rempli notre devoir, nous retournâmes chez nous au milieu des félicitations de nos concitoyens ; et nous sommes venus déposer dans le sein de l'Assemblée nationale l'hommage de nos services.



[ N<sup>o</sup>. 20. ]

*Déclarations données par le Roi et par la Reine  
aux Commissaires de l'Assemblée, le Di-  
manche 26 Juin 1791.*

## D É C L A R A T I O N D U R O I.

“ Je vois, Messieurs, par l'objet de la mission qui vous est donnée, qu'il ne s'agit point ici d'un interrogatoire; mais je veux bien répondre au désir de l'Assemblée nationale, je ne craindrai jamais de rendre publics les motifs de ma conduite. ”

“ Les motifs de mon départ sont les outrages et les menaces qui ont été faites, le 18 Avril, à ma famille et à moi-même. Depuis ce tems, plusieurs écrits ont cherché à provoquer des violences contre ma personne et ma famille, et ces insultes sont restées jusqu'à présent impunies; j'ai cru dès-lors qu'il n'y avoit pas de sûreté, ni même de décence pour ma famille et pour moi de rester à Paris; j'ai désiré en conséquence quitter cette ville. Ne le pouvant faire publiquement j'ai résolu de sortir de nuit et sans suite. ”

“ Jamais mon intention n'a été de sortir du royaume. Je n'ai eu aucun concert sur cet ob-



jet, ni avec les puissances étrangères, ni avec mes parens, ni avec aucun autre Français sorti du royaume. Je pourrois donner pour preuve de mon intention que des logemens étoient préparés à Montmédi, pour me recevoir ainsi que ma famille. ”

“ J’avois choisi cette place, parce qu’étant fortifiée, ma famille y auroit été en sûreté, et qu’étant près des frontières, j’aurois été plus à portée de m’opposer à toute espèce d’invasion dans la France, si on avoit voulu en tenter quelques unes, et de me porter moi-même par-tout où j’aurois pu croire qu’il y avoit quelque danger. ”

“ Enfin, j’avois choisi Montmédi comme le premier point de ma retraite, jusqu’au moment où j’aurois trouvé à propos de me rendre dans telle autre partie du royaume qui m’auroit paru convenable. ”

“ *Un de mes principaux motifs, en quittant Paris, étoit de faire tomber l’argument qu’on tiroit de ma non liberté, qui pouvoit devenir une occasion nouvelle de troubles. ”*

“ Si j’avois eu l’intention de sortir du royaume, je n’aurois pas publié mon mémoire le jour de mon départ ; mais j’aurois attendu d’être hors des frontières. ”

“ Je conservois toujours le désir de retourner à Paris. C’est dans ce sens qu’il faut entendre la dernière phrase de mon mémoire, dans laquelle je dis : *Français, et vous sur-tout Parisiens, quel plaisir*



*plaisir n'aurai-je pas à me retrouver au milieu de vous !*

“ Je n'avois dans ma voiture que 13,000 livres en or, et 560,000 livres en assignats, contenus dans le porte-feuille qui m'a été renvoyé par le Département. ”

“ Je n'ai prévenu MONSIEUR de mon départ, que peu de tems auparavant : il n'a passé dans le pays étranger que parce qu'il avoit été convenu entre lui et moi que nous ne suivrions pas la même route, et il devoit venir en France auprès de moi. ”

“ J'avois fait donner des ordres peu de jours avant mon départ, aux trois personnes qui m'accompagnoient en courriers, de se faire faire des habits de courriers pour porter des dépêches. Ce n'est que la veille que l'un d'eux a reçu verbalement mes ordres. ”

“ Le Passe-port étoit nécessaire pour faciliter mon voyage : il n'a été indiqué pour un pays étranger, que parce qu'on n'en donnoit pas au bureau des affaires étrangères pour l'intérieur du royaume, et la route indiquée par Francfort n'a pas été suivie dans ce voyage. ”

“ Je n'ai jamais fait aucune protestation que celle contenue dans le mémoire que j'avois fait à mon départ. *Cette protestation ne porte pas même ainsi que le contenu du mémoire, sur le fond des principes de la Constitution, mais sur la forme des sanctions ; c'est-à-dire, sur le peu de liberté dont je*



*paroissois jouir, et sur ce que les décrets n'ayant pas été présentés en masse, je ne pouvois pas juger de l'ensemble de la Constitution. ”*

*“ Le principal reproche qui est contenu dans le mémoire, se rapporte aux difficultés dans les moyens d'administration et d'exécution. J'ai reconnu dans mon voyage que l'opinion publique étoit décidée en faveur de la Constitution. Je n'avois pas cru pouvoir connoître pleinement cette opinion publique à Paris, mais, d'après les notions que j'ai recueillies personnellement dans ma route, je me suis convaincu combien il étoit nécessaire pour le bonheur de la Nation, et même pour la Constitution, de donner de la force aux pouvoirs établis pour maintenir l'ordre public. ”*

*“ Aussitôt que j'ai reconnu la volonté générale, je n'ai point hésité, comme je n'ai jamais hésité, de faire le sacrifice de tout ce qui m'est personnel pour le bonheur du peuple, qui a toujours été l'objet de mes desirs. J'oublierai volontiers tous les désagrémens que je peux avoir essuiés, pour assurer la paix et la tranquillité de la Nation. ”*

*“ Le Roi, après avoir pris lecture de la déclaration, a observé qu'il avoit omis d'ajouter que la gouvernante de son fils et les femmes de suite, n'avoient été averties que peu de tems avant son départ; et le Roi a signé avec nous. ”*

*Signés, LOUIS, TRONCHET, DUPORT et D'ANDRÉ.*



*Déclaration donnée par la Reine aux Commissaires de l'Assemblée, le Lundi 27 Juin 1791.*

“ Je déclare que le Roi désirant partir avec ses enfans, rien dans la nature n'auroit pu m'empêcher de le suivre. J'ai assez prouvé, depuis deux ans, dans plusieurs circonstances, que je voulois ne le quitter jamais. Ce qui m'a encore plus déterminée, c'est l'assurance positive que j'avois que le Roi ne vouloit pas quitter le royaume ; s'il en avoit eu le désir, toute ma force auroit été employée pour l'en empêcher. ”

“ La gouvernante de mon fils étoit malade depuis trois semaines, et n'a reçu les ordres que peu de tems avant le voyage ; elle en ignoroit absolument la destination. Elle n'a emporté avec elle aucune espèce de hardes ; et j'ai été obligée moi-même de lui en prêter. ”

“ Les trois courriers n'ont point su la destination ni le but du voyage. Sur le chemin on leur donnoit de l'argent pour payer les chevaux : ils recevoient l'ordre pour la route. Les deux femmes de chambre, ont été averties dans l'instant même du départ, et l'une d'elles qui a son mari dans le château, n'a pas pu le voir avant de partir. ”

“ MONSIEUR et MADAME devoient venir nous joindre en France, et ils ne sont passés dans



le pays étranger que pour ne pas embarrasser et faire manquer de chevaux sur la route. Nous sommes sortis par l'appartement de M. de Villequier, en prenant la précaution de ne sortir que séparément et à diverses reprises. ”

“ Après avoir fait lecture à la Reine de la présente déclaration, elle a reconnu qu'elle étoit conforme à ce qu'elle nous avoit dit, et elle a signé avec nous. ”

*Signés,* MARIE-ANTOINETTE,  
TRONCHET, D'ANDRÉ et DUPORT.

[ N° 21. ]

*Lettre de M. le Marquis DE BOUILLÉ à  
l'Assemblée.*

A Luxembourg, le 26 Juin 1791.

MESSIEURS,

Le Roi vient de faire un effort pour briser les fers dans lesquels vous le retenez depuis longtemps, ainsi que sa famille infortunée. Une destinée aveugle à laquelle les empires sont soumis, et contre laquelle la prudence des hommes ne



peut rien, en a décidé autrement : il est encore votre captif, et ses jours ainsi que ceux de la Reine, sont ( et j'en fremis ) à la disposition d'un peuple que vous avez rendu féroce et sanguinaire, et qui est devenu l'objet du mépris de l'univers. Il est intéressant pour vous, Messieurs, pour ce que vous appelez la Nation, pour moi enfin, pour le Roi lui-même, que les causes qui ont produit cet évènement, que les circonstances qui l'ont accompagné, que le grand objet qui devoit en être le résultat et qui avoit inspiré au Roi ce dessein noble et courageux, soient connus des Français ; qu'ils le soient de l'Europe entière et que l'on sache qu'en désertant de sa prison, en voulant chercher sur la frontière un asile près de moi et parmi ses troupes, il a eu moins en vue son salut que celui d'un peuple ingrat et cruel. Les dangers qu'il pouvoit courir, ceux auxquels il exposoit sa famille, rien n'a pu l'arrêter ; il n'a écouté que la générosité et la bonté de son cœur.

“ Dégagé dans ce moment de tous les liens qui m'attachoient à vous, n'étant plus retenu par aucune considération, libre enfin, je vais vous parler le langage de la vérité que vous n'êtes peut-être plus en état d'entendre, et que vous n'écouteriez sans doute pas ; mais j'aurai rempli tout ce que je dois à ma patrie, tout ce que je dois à mon Roi, tout ce que je me dois à moi-même. ”

“ Je ne vous rappellerai pas, Messieurs, ce



que vous avez fait depuis deux ans ; je ne retracerai pas le tableau du désordre affreux dans lequel vous avez plongé le royaume ; mais le Roi étoit devenu le prisonnier de son peuple ; lui et son auguste famille étoient en butte aux plus sanglans outrages. Attaché à mon Souverain, attaché à la Monarchie, en détestant les abus qui étoient résultés d'une autorité trop étendue, et qu'il vouloit lui-même circonscrire, je gémissois de la frénésie du peuple que vous aviez égaré ; je gémissois des malheurs du Roi ; je blâmois vos opérations ridicules et insensées ; mais j'espérois qu'enfin la raison reprendroit ses droits ; que le délire du peuple cesseroit ; que les méchans seroient confondus ; que l'anarchie que vous avez établie par principes, finiroit ; que l'ordre renaîtroit et nous rameneroit un gouvernement si non excellent, du moins supportable, et que le tems pourroit le rendre meilleur ; c'est ce qui m'a fait souffrir toutes les épreuves auxquelles vous m'avez mis, depuis le commencement de la révolution : mon attachement pour le Roi, mon amour pour ma patrie, m'ont donné le courage et la patience nécessaires pour braver les insultes et les affronts, et pour supporter la honte et l'humiliation de communiquer avec vous. Le tems a détruit mes espérances : j'ai vu que dans votre Assemblée il ne régnoit aucun esprit public ; que celui de faction seul y dominoit, et la divisoit en plusieurs partis, dont les uns vouloient le désor-



dre, l'entrenoient, le provoquoient même pour faire naître la guerre civile, comme étant pour eux la seule voie de salut ; les autres vouloient une République. *M. de la Fayette* étoit à la tête de ce parti ; son ambition sourde et cachée le conduisoit au seul but qu'il avoit d'être le chef d'un gouvernement aussi monstrueux pour nous. C'est dans ces circonstances que les clubs s'établirent, qu'ils achevèrent de corrompre le peuple dans toutes les parties de l'Empire, et de détruire l'armée. Je vis donc que l'anarchie étoit parvenue au dernier période : la populace, dirigée par les intrigans de tous les coins de la France, étant devenue maîtresse absolue ; qu'il n'existoit plus de force publique ; le Roi avoit perdu non seulement sa considération, mais encore sa liberté ; que les loix étoient sans force et sans vigueur, que l'armée ne présentait plus qu'une soldatesque effrénée, ne connoissant ni autorité, ni chefs, qu'il ne restoit plus de moyen de rétablir l'ordre, et que toute ressource étoit ôtée, tout espoir détruit. ”

“ Ce fut alors que je proposai au Roi de sortir de Paris, de venir se réfugier avec sa famille dans quelque place frontière, où je l'environnerois de troupes fidèles ; persuadé que cette démarche pourroit opérer quelque changement avantageux dans l'esprit du peuple, déchirer le bandeau qui couvroit ses yeux, et déjouer tous les factieux. Le Roi et la Reine s'y refusèrent constamment,



alléguant la promesse qu'ils avoient faite de rester dans Paris, auprès de l'Assemblée. Je leur représentai qu'une promesse arrachée par la force ne pouvoit les lier ; mais ce fut en vain. Je ne pus ébranler leur résolution. ”

“ La journée du 28 Février me donna lieu de renouveler au Roi mes instances. J'éprouvai les mêmes refus et la même constance dans ses principes. Il craignoit les évènements qui pouvoient résulter de sa fuite, les effets de la fureur du peuple et l'accroissement, s'il étoit possible, de l'anarchie et du désordre. Je le dis avec vérité, la Reine pensoit de même, et se refusa à toutes mes propositions. Je ne perdis pas courage, j'étois convaincu que le départ du Roi étoit le seul moyen de sauver l'État ; je savois que toutes les puissances de l'Europe armoient contre la France ; qu'elles se préparoient à lui faire la guerre, à envahir son territoire. Libre au milieu de ses troupes, le Roi seul pouvoit arrêter la marche des armées ennemies. Sans doute alors, frappé de terreur, le peuple se voyant sans moyens de défense, instruit que l'armée n'existoit plus, que les places étoient presque démantelées, que les finances étoient épuisées, que le papier ne pouvoit suppléer au numéraire qui avoit fui de cette terre appauvrie, il auroit de lui-même prévenu les vues bienfaisantes du Monarque, et se seroit jeté dans ses bras. ”

“ Après l'arrestation du Roi, le 18 Avril, lors-



qu'il voulut aller à St. Cloud, je lui renouvelai mes instances avec plus de force, en lui faisant envisager qu'il n'y avoit que ce parti à prendre pour sauver la France, qui alloit bientôt être déchirée par une guerre civile, et mise en lambeaux par une guerre étrangère. Le bonheur, ou plutôt le salut du peuple fit sur son cœur généreux, l'impression que j'en attendois, et il se décida enfin, il fut résolu qu'il iroit à Montmédi et que dès qu'il y seroit en sûreté, il annoncerait aux Princes étrangers la démarche qu'il venoit de faire et les motifs qui l'y avoient engagé ; qu'il feroit en sorte de suspendre leur vengeance, (*ici de longs éclats de rire et des murmures.*) jusqu'à ce qu'une nouvelle Assemblée, qu'il auroit convoquée, leur eût donné la satisfaction qu'ils devoient attendre, et qu'elle eût réglé les droits du Monarque, ainsi que ceux du peuple français. Une proclamation devoit annoncer un nouveau Corps législatif librement choisi. L'exécution des cahiers qui exprimoient seuls le vœu de la Nation, auroit servi de base au travail des représentans des Français. ”

“ Le Roi devenu médiateur entre les puissances étrangères et son peuple, (*on rit.*) celui-ci placé entre la crainte de voir la France devenir la proie des armes étrangères qui environnent les frontières, et l'espoir du rétablissement de l'ordre par un gouvernement circonscrit dans les bornes de la raison, auroit confié ses droits et ses



intérêts à des hommes sages et éclairés qui auroient rempli le vœu du prince et celui du peuple; les injustices, les usurpations, le règne du crime enfin, source inévitable du despotisme populaire, eussent sans doute cessé, et peut-être du cahos où nous sommes, aurions-nous vu renaître les beaux jours de l'Empire français, éclairé par le flambeau de la liberté. Voilà ce que vouloit votre malheureux Monarque. Malgré vous-même, malgré l'ingratitude et l'atrocité de ce peuple féroce, il vouloit encore son bonheur! C'est cette seule idée, c'est ce beau désir qui ont déterminé la démarche hardie qu'il a faite en trompant la vigilance de M. de la Fayette, en s'exposant à la fureur de ses satellites et en guidant ses pas vers moi. ”

“ Nul autre motif ne l'a conduit ; mais votre aveuglement vous a fait repousser la main protectrice qu'il vous tendoit : il va bientôt produire la destruction de l'Empire français. (*Nouveaux éclats de rire.* )

“ Croyez-moi, Messieurs, les Princes de l'Europe reconnoissent qu'ils sont, ainsi que leurs peuples, menacés par le monstre que vous avez enfanté. Ils sont armés pour le combattre et bientôt notre malheureuse patrie, ( car je lui donne encore ce nom ) n'offrira plus qu'une scène de dévastation et d'horreurs. Je connois mieux que personne les moyens de défense que vous avez à opposer. Ils sont nuls. (*Ris.* ) Tout espoir seroit chimérique,



Il n'est plus tems de vous abuser. Il ne l'est peut-être plus de dessiller les yeux du peuple que vous avez criminellement trompé et dont vous serez justement et sévèrement punis. Votre châtiment servira d'exemple mémorable à la postérité, qui vous reprochera éternellement d'avoir assassiné votre patrie, dont vous pouviez prolonger la durée pendant des siècles, dont vous pouviez assurer et embellir la destinée.

“ C'est ainsi que doit vous parler un homme qui n'a rien à attendre de vous, auquel vous avez inspiré d'abord la pitié, et qui n'a plus pour vous et pour le peuple anthropophage que vous avez enivré de crimes, que du mépris, de l'indignation et de l'horreur. ”

“ Au surplus n'accusez personne du complot et de la conspiration prétendue contre ce que vous appelez la Nation et votre infernale Constitution. J'ai tout arrangé, tout réglé, tout ordonné.

Le Roi lui-même n'a pas fait les ordres; c'est moi seul. Ceux qui ont dû les exécuter n'ont été instruits qu'au moment, et ils ne pouvoient y désobéir. C'est contre moi seul que doit être dirigée votre fureur sanguinaire, que vous devez aiguïser vos poignards et préparer vos poisons. J'ai voulu sauver ma patrie. J'ai voulu sauver le Roi, sa famille. Voilà mon crime. - Vous répondrez de leurs jours, je ne dis pas à moi, mais à tous les Rois, et je vous annonce que si on



leur ôte un cheveu de la tête, avant peu il ne restera pas pierre sur pierre à Paris. (*Eclats de rire.*) Je connois les chemins; j'y guiderai les armées étrangères, et vous-mêmes en serez responsables sur vos têtes. Cette lettre n'est que l'avant-coureur du manifeste des Souverains de l'Europe, qui vous instruiront, avec des caractères plus prononcés, de ce que vous avez à faire et de ce que vous avez à craindre."

"Adieu, Messieurs, je finis sans complimens, mes sentimens vous sont connus. ,,"

*Signé, Le marquis DE BOUILLÉ.*

[ N<sup>o</sup>. 22. ]

*Extrait du rapport fait à l'Assemblée, le 13 Juillet 1791, au nom des sept comités, chargés de rendre compte des évènements du 21 Juin.*

Mr. Muguet organe des sept comités réunis pour préparer les décrets à porter au sujet de l'évènement du 21 Juin, a retracé les détails connus de la sortie nocturne des Tuileries, une voiture sur le quai des Théatins, une autre dans la cour des Princes, Les 3 gardes du corps en veste jaune, réunion de la famille Royale dans



une voiture plus commode à la porte S. Martin. A Sainte-Menehould le Sieur Drouet, maître de poste, crut avoir reconnu la Reine, dit le rapporteur, et dans le récit du Sieur Drouet, ce fut le Roi qu'il reconnut d'après l'effigie empreinte sur un assignat de 50 liv. N'importe MM. Drouet et Guillaume devancent les voyageurs et vont annoncer au Sieur le Blanc, aubergiste à Varennes, qu'ils soupçonnent que ces deux voitures qui vont arriver, renferment le Roi et sa famille. Les deux frères le Blanc et d'autres arrêterent la voiture du Roi, le Sieur Sausse, procureur-Syndic de la Commune et l'Officier municipal faisant les fonctions de Maire, prétextent qu'il est trop tard, pour viser les passe-ports, que les chemins sont défaits, que ses raisons et l'alarme qui se répand doivent engager les voyageurs à descendre chez le Sieur Sausse ; Ils y descendent, on barricade la ville et des canons sont posés près de la maison.

Un détachement de hussards commandé par un aide de camp de Mr. De Bouillé arrive et se range en bataille devant cette maison et l'aide-de-camp est introduit auprès du Roi, qui lui demande : quand part-on ? L'officier répond qu'il n'attend que ses ordres. Le Roi lui déclare, et au major de la garde nationale survenu, qu'il ne veut que 50 à 100 gardes nationaux pour l'accompagner, et se jettant dans les bras de Mr. Sausse, il lui dit : " Je suis votre Roi.



“ Placé dans la capitale au milieu des poignards  
“ et des bayonnettes, je viens chercher en pro-  
“ vince, au sein de mes fidèles sujets, la liberté  
“ et la paix dont vous jouissez. Je ne puis plus  
“ rester à Paris sans y mourir et ma famille en  
“ même-tems. ” L'infortuné Monarque em-  
brasse ceux qui l'entourent ; la Reine partage  
ses craintes, se joint à ses instances, il persite à  
vouloir se rendre à Montmédi, en protestant qu'il  
ne veut pas sortir du Royaume, et que la garde  
nationale peut l'accompagner ; 20 Dragons tra-  
versèrent la ville ; on met les hussards entre  
deux batteries ; leur commandant va charger la  
garde nationale dont l'aide major pare un coup  
de sabre et lâche un coup de pistolet qui casse  
l'épaule au commandant des hussards. Ceux-ci  
demandent à être commandés par un officier de  
la garde nationale, et l'air retentit des cris :  
Vive le Roi ! Vive la Nation ! Vive l'Assemblée  
nationale ! Vive Lauzun !

Arrive un aide de camp de M. de la Fayette  
porteur du décret. Le Roi persévère à vouloir  
partir pour Montmédi. Le retour est décidé.  
Les citoyens accourus forment un nombreux cor-  
tège. On se met en marche vers Châlons. Ici  
le rapporteur affirme que le Roi ne reçut sur la  
route que des témoignages de respect ; il cite  
bien l'ordre digne de l'excellent cœur de Henri  
IV, l'ordre que le meilleur des Rois fit donner  
au fils de Mr. de Bouillé de ne rien entreprendre ;



mais il ne dit pas un seul mot de Mr. de Dampierre, égorgé sous les yeux du Monarque, des horribles imprécations qui frappaient l'air au tour de la voiture, où se résignoient si magnaniment le vertueux Prince et sa malheureuse famille. Il n'oublie cependant pas d'ajouter que par tout on crioit : Vive la Nation ! Vive l'Assemblée nationale ! et s'en remet pour les détails à ce qu'en ont raconté les commissaires.

Après un long extrait des différens procès-verbaux, il a posé cette grande question qui n'en fut jamais une : *Le Roi peut-il être mis en cause ?* Et il en a trouvé la solution dans les décrets constitutionnels. Vous avez décrété, juré une Constitution monarchique et l'inviolabilité du Roi qui n'est pas un citoyen, mais un pouvoir. Si le Roi n'avoit pas été indépendant, s'il pouvoit être jugé par l'Assemblée, il lui seroit soumis, il ne seroit pas libre ; on ne peut séparer le Roi de la royauté. S'il commettoit un crime, on le supposeroit en état de démence. Son évasion n'est pas même un délit. Vous ne pouvez prononcer sur des loix qui ne sont pas faites. Fut-il sorti du royaume, il n'auroit pas forfait à la Constitution, avant de se refuser à une proclamation. La déclaration qu'il a laissée n'a aucun caractère légal et ne contient aucune renonciation directe ni indirecte à la Royauté. Son acceptation étoit une formalité inutile à vos dé-

Gouville de Bridge et M. de Tournay



crets . . . . : Le Roi n'est donc pas coupable aux yeux de la Loi.

Soulevant le voile qui peut-être auroit dû couvrir toujours les suites possibles d'une opinion contraire, M. Muguet a laissé entrevoir les malheurs qui désolèrent l'Angleterre lors du meurtre de Charles I, on a rapproché les troubles de la minorité de Louis XIV, idées qui ne naissent ici que de l'hypothèse la plus déchirante et la plus affreuse à méditer ; et il a fini par ces mots : “ Vous verriez des régens que la loi désigne et “ que la confiance éloigne. ” Tous les motifs des comités, se combinant dans ses conclusions, le rapporteur a pensé que le Roi ne pourroit, sous aucun rapport, être mis en jugement ; et il a proposé de décréter ,

1°. Què le procès sera fait et parfait à Louis-François-Amour Bouillé et à ses auteurs, complices et adhérens. 2°. Que MM. Heyman, Klinglin, Doffelize, Désoteux, Goguelas, Damas, Choiseuil, Stainville, Dandrouin, Velcour, Mandel, Manassin, Talon, Bouillé fils, Fersen, Maldent, Velory et Dumoutier sont soupçonnés d'avoir eu connoissance du complot, et d'avoir eu en vue de le favoriser ; que leur procès leur sera fait et parfait. 3°. Que les personnes ci-dessus dénommées, qui sont ou seront arrêtées, seront conduites dans les prisons de la ville d'Orléans. 4°. Que M. Floriac, Remy, Lacour, Gouville, de Bridge et M<sup>de</sup> de Tourzel resteront



en arrestation, pour être, après les informations, statué ce qu'il appartiendra. 5°. Que les Dames Brunier et Neuville, femmes de chambre de Mgr. le Dauphin et de la fille du Roi, seront mises en liberté.

[ N°. 23. ]

### LETTRE DES PRINCES AU ROI.

SIRE, NOTRE FRERE ET SEIGNEUR,

“ Lorsque l'Assemblée, qui vous doit l'existence, et qui ne l'a fait servir qu'à la destruction de votre pouvoir, se croit au moment de consommer sa coupable entreprise ; lorsqu'à l'indignité de vous tenir captif au milieu de votre Capitale, elle ajoute la perfidie de vouloir que vous dégradiez votre trône de votre propre main ; lorsqu'elle ose enfin vous présenter l'option, ou de souscrire des décrets qui feroient le malheur de vos peuples, ou de cesser d'être Roi. Nous nous empressons d'apprendre à Votre Majesté que les Puissances dont nous avons réclamé pour elle le secours, sont déterminées à y employer leurs forces, et que l'Empereur et le Roi de Prusse viennent d'en contracter l'engagement mutuel. Le sage *Léopold*, aussitôt après avoir assuré la tranquillité de ses états et amené celle de l'Europe, a signé

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cet engagement à Pilnitz, le 27 du mois dernier, conjointement avec le digne successeur du grand Frédéric ; ils en ont remis l'original entre nos mains ; et pour le faire parvenir à votre connoissance, nous le ferons imprimer à la suite de cette lettre, la publicité étant aujourd'hui la seule voie de communication dont vos cruels oppresseurs n'ayent pu nous priver. ”

“ Les autres cours sont dans les mêmes dispositions que celle de Vienne et Berlin. Les Princes et Etats de l'Empire ont déjà protesté dans des actes authentiques, contre les lésions faites à des droits qu'ils ont résolu de soutenir avec vigueur. Vous ne sauriez douter, Sire, du vif intérêt que les Rois Bourbons prennent à votre situation ; Leurs Majestés Catholique et Sicilienne en ont donné des témoignages non équivoques. Les généreux sentimens du Roi de Sardaigne notre beau-père, ne peuvent pas être incertains. Vous avez droit de compter sur ceux des Suisses, les bons et anciens amis de la France. Jusques dans le fond du Nord, un Roi magnanime veut aussi contribuer à rétablir votre autorité ; et l'immortelle Catherine, à qui aucun genre de gloire n'est étranger, ne laissera pas échapper celle de défendre la cause de tous les Souverains. ”

“ Il n'est point à craindre que la Nation Britannique, trop généreuse pour contrarier ce qu'elle trouve juste, trop éclairée pour ne pas désirer ce qui intéresse sa propre tranquillité, veuille s'op-



poser aux vues de cette noble et irrésistible Confédération. ”

“ Ainsi dans vos malheurs, Sire, vous avez la consolation de voir les Puissances conspirées à les faire cesser, et votre fermeté dans le moment critique où vous êtes, aura pour appui l’Europe entière. ”

“ Ceux qui savent qu’on n’ébranle vos résolutions qu’en attaquant votre sensibilité, voudront sans doute vous faire envisager l’aide des Puissances étrangères comme pouvant devenir funeste à vos sujets ; ce qui n’est que vue auxiliaire, ils le travestiront en vue hostile et vous peindront le Royaume inondé de sang, déchiré dans toutes ses parties, menacé de démembrements. C’est ainsi qu’après avoir toujours employé les plus fausses alarmes pour causer les maux les plus réels, ils veulent se servir encore du même moyen pour les perpétuer. C’est ainsi qu’ils espèrent faire supporter les fléaux de leur odieuse tyrannie, en faisant croire que tout ce qui la combat, conduit au plus dur esclavage. ”

“ Mais, Sire, les intentions des Souverains qui vous donneront des secours, sont aussi droites, aussi pures que le zèle qui nous les a fait solliciter : elles n’ont rien d’effrayant ni pour l’état, ni pour vos peuples. Ce n’est point les attaquer, c’est leur rendre le plus signalé de tous les services, que de les arracher au despotisme des démagogues et aux calamités de l’anarchie. Vous



vouliez assurer plus que jamais la liberté de vos sujets, quand des séditeux vous ont ravi la vôtre : ce que nous faisons pour parvenir à vous la rendre, avec la mesure d'autorité qui vous appartient légitimement, ne peut être suspect de volonté oppressive. C'est au contraire venger la liberté, que de réprimer la licence ; c'est affranchir la Nation que de rétablir la force publique sans laquelle elle ne peut être libre. Ces principes, Sire, sont les vôtres ; le même esprit de modération et de bienfaisance qui caractérise toutes vos actions, sera la règle de notre conduite ; il est l'ame de toutes nos démarches auprès des Cours étrangères ; et dépositaires de témoignages positifs des vues aussi généreuses qu'équitables qui les animent, nous pouvons garantir qu'elles n'ont d'autre désir, que de vous remettre en possession du gouvernement de vos états, pour que vos Peuples puissent jouir en paix des bienfaits que vous leur avez destinés. ”

“ Si les rebelles opposent à ce désir une résistance opiniâtre et aveugle, qui force les armées étrangères de pénétrer dans le Royaume, eux seuls les y auront attirées ; sur eux seuls réjailliroit le sang coupable qu'il seroit nécessaire de répandre ; la guerre seroit leur ouvrage ; le but des Puissances confédérées n'est que de soutenir la partie saine de la Nation, contre la partie délirante, et d'éteindre au sein du Royaume le volcan de fanatisme dont les éruptions propagées menacent tous les Empires. ”



“ D’ailleurs, Sire, il n’y a pas lieu de croire que les Français, quelque soin qu’on prenne d’enflammer leur bravoure naturelle en exaltant, en électrisant toutes les têtes par des prestiges de patriotisme et de liberté, veuillent long-tems sacrifier leur repos, leurs biens et leur sang pour soutenir une innovation extravagante qui n’a fait que des malheureux. L’ivresse n’a qu’un tems ; les succès du crime ont des bornes ; et on se lasse bientôt des excès, quand on en est soi-même victime. Bientôt on se demandera pourquoi l’on se bat ; et l’on verra que c’est pour servir l’ambition d’une troupe de factieux qu’on méprise, contre un Roi qui s’est toujours montré juste et humain : pourquoi l’on se ruine : et l’on verra que c’est pour assouvir la cupidité de ceux qui se sont emparés de toutes les richesses de l’Etat, qui en font le plus détestable usage, et qui, chargés de restaurer les finances publiques, les ont précipitées dans un abîme épouvantable ; pourquoi l’on viole les devoirs les plus sacrés : et l’on verra que c’est pour devenir plus pauvres, plus souffrans, plus vexés, plus imposés qu’on ne l’avoit jamais été ; pourquoi on bouleverse l’ancien gouvernement : et l’on verra que c’est dans le vain espoir d’en introduire un, qui, s’il étoit praticable, seroit mille fois plus abusif, mais dont l’exécution est absolument impossible ; pourquoi l’on persécute les Ministres de Dieu : et l’on verra que c’est pour favoriser les desseins d’une secte



orgueilleuse qui a résolu de détruire toute Religion, et par conséquent de déchaîner tous les crimes. ”

“ Déjà même toutes ces vérités sont devenues sensibles; déjà le voile de l'imposture se déchire de toutes parts, et les murmures contre l'Assemblée qui a usurpé tous les pouvoirs et anéanti tous les droits, s'étendent d'une extrémité du Royaume à l'autre. ”

“ Ne jugez pas, Sire, de la disposition du plus grand nombre, par les mouvemens les plus turbulens; ne jugez pas le sentiment national d'après l'inaction de la fidélité et son apparente indifférence lorsque vous fûtes arrêté à Varennes, et lorsqu'une troupe de satellites vous reconduisit à Paris. L'effroi glaçoit alors tous les esprits, et faisoit régner un morne silence. Ce qu'on vous cache, ce qui dénote bien mieux le changement qui s'est fait et se fait de jour en jour, dans l'opinion, ce sont les marques de mécontentemens qui percent dans toutes les provinces, et qui n'attendent qu'un appui pour éclater davantage; c'est la demande que plusieurs départemens viennent de former pour que l'Assemblée ait à rendre compte des sommes immenses qu'elle a dilapidées depuis sa gestion; c'est la frayeur que ses chefs laissent appercevoir, et leur tentatives réitérées pour entrer en accommodement; ce sont les plaintes du commerce et l'explosion récente du désespoir de nos Colonies; c'est enfin la pénurie



absolue du numéraire, le refus des contribuables de payer les impôts, l'attente d'une banqueroute prochaine, la défection des troupes qui, victimes de tous les genres de séduction, commencent à s'en indigner; et le progrès toujours croissant des émigrations. Il est impossible de se méprendre à de pareils signes, et leur notoriété est telle, que l'audace même des séducteurs du Peuple ne sauroit en contester la vérité. ”

“ Ne croyez donc pas, Sire, aux exagérations des dangers par lesquels on s'efforce de vous effrayer. On sait que, peu sensible à ceux qui ne menaceroient que votre Personne, vous l'êtes infiniment à ceux qui tomberoient sur vos Peuples, ou qui pourroient frapper des objets chers à votre cœur; et c'est sur eux qu'on a la barbarie de vous faire frémir continuellement, en même tems qu'on a l'impudence de vanter votre liberté. Mais depuis trop long-tems on abuse de cet artifice, et le moment est venu de rejeter sur les factieux qui vous outragent, l'arme de la terreur qui jusqu'ici a fait toute leur force. ”

“ Les grands forfaits ne sont point à craindre, lorsqu'il n'y a aucun intérêt à les commettre, ni aucun moyen d'éviter, en les commettant, une punition terrible. Tout Paris sait, tout Paris doit savoir, que si une scélératesse fanatique ou soudoyée, osoit attenter à vos jours ou à ceux de la Reine, des armées puissantes, chassant devant elles une milice foible par indiscipline, dé-



couragée par les remords, viendroient aussi-tôt fondre sur la ville impie qui auroit attiré sur elle la vengeance du Ciel et l'indignation de l'Univers. Aucun des coupables ne pourroit alors échapper aux plus rigoureux supplices: donc, aucun d'eux ne voudra s'y exposer. ”

“ Mais si la plus aveugle fureur armoit un bras parricide, vous verriez, Sire, n'en doutez pas, des milliers de Citoyens fidèles, se précipiter autour de la Famille Royale, vous couvrir, s'il le falloit, de leurs corps, et verser tout leur sang pour défendre le vôtre.... Eh ! pourquoi cesseriez-vous de compter sur l'affection d'un peuple dont vous n'avez pas cessé un seul moment de vouloir le bonheur? ”

“ Le Français se laisse facilement égarer: mais facilement aussi il rentre dans la route du devoir; ses mœurs sont naturellement trop douces pour que ses actions soient long-tems féroces, et son amour pour ses Rois est trop enraciné dans son cœur, pour qu'une illusion funeste ait pu l'en arracher entièrement. ”

“ Qui pourroit être plus porté que nous à concevoir des alarmes sur la situation d'un Frère tendrement chéri ? Mais au dire même de vos plus téméraires, oppresseurs, ce refus du résumé constitutionnel que nous apprenons vous avoir été présenté par l'Assemblée le trois de ce mois, ne vous exposerait qu'au danger d'être destitué par elle, de la Royauté. ”



“ Or ce danger n'en est pas un. Qu'importe que vous cessiez d'être Roi aux yeux des factieux, lorsque vous le seriez plus solidement et plus glorieusement que jamais, aux yeux de toute l'Europe et dans le cœur de tous vos sujets fidèles ? Qu'importe que par une entreprise insensée, on osât vous déclarer déchu du trône de vos ancêtres, lorsque les forces combinées de toutes les Puissances sont préparées pour vous y maintenir et punir les vils usurpateurs qui en auroient souillé l'éclat ? ”

“ Le danger seroit bien plus grand, si en paroissant consentir à la dissolution de la Monarchie, vous paroissiez affoiblir vos droits personnels aux secours de tous les Monarques, et si vous sembliez vous séparer de la cause des Souverains en consacrant une doctrine qu'ils sont obligés de proscrire. Le péril augmenteroit en proportion de ce que vous montreriez moins de confiance dans les moyens préservateurs ; il augmenteroit à mesure que l'impression du caractère auguste qui fait trembler le crime aux pieds de la Majesté Royale dignement soutenue, perdrait de sa force ; il augmenteroit lorsque l'apparence de l'abandon des intérêts de la Religion pourroit exciter la fermentation la plus redoutable. Il augmenteroit enfin, si vous résignant à n'avoir plus que le vain titre d'un Roi sans pouvoir, vous paroissiez, au jugement de l'Univers, abdiquer la couronne dont chacun sait



que la conservation exige celle des droits inaliénables qui y sont essentiellement inhérens. ”

“ Le plus sacré des devoirs, Sire, ainsi que le plus vif attachement, nous portent à mettre sous vos yeux toutes ces conséquences dangereuses de la moindre apparence de foiblesse, en même tems que nous vous présentons la masse des forces imposantes qui doit être la sauve-garde de votre fermeté. ”

“ Nous devons encore vous annoncer, et même nous jurons à vos pieds, que si des motifs qu’il nous est impossible d’appercevoir, mais qui ne pourroient avoir pour principe que l’excès de la violence et une contrainte qui pour être déguisée, n’en seroit que plus cruelle, forçoient votre main de souscrire une acceptation que votre cœur rejette, que votre intérêt et celui de vos peuples repoussent, et que votre devoir de Roi vous interdit expressément, nous protesterions, à la face de toute la terre, et de la manière la plus solennelle, contre cet acte illusoire et tout ce qui pourroit en dépendre ; nous démontrerions qu’il est nul par lui-même, nul par le défaut de liberté, nul par le vice radical de toutes les opérations de l’Assemblée usurpatrice qui, n’étant pas Assemblée d’Etats - Généraux, n’est rien. Nous sommes fondés sur les droits de la Nation entière, à rejeter des décrets diamétralement contraires à son vœu exprimé par l’unanimité de ses cahiers ; et nous désavouerions pour



elle, des mandataires infidèles qui, en violant ses ordres et transgressant la mission qu'elle leur avoit donnée, ont cessé d'être ses représentans. Nous soutiendrions, ce qui est évident, qu'ayant agi contre leur titre, ils ont agi sans pouvoir, et que ce qu'ils n'ont pu faire légalement, ne peut être accepté validement. ”

“ Notre protestation signée avec nous, par tous les Princes de votre Sang qui nous sont réunis, seroit commune à toute la maison de Bourbon à qui ses droits éventuels à la couronne imposent le devoir d'en défendre l'auguste dépôt. Nous protesterions pour vous-même, Sire, en protestant pour vos peuples, pour la Religion, pour les maximes fondamentales de la Monarchie, et pour tous les ordres de l'Etat.

“ Nous protesterions pour vous et en votre nom, contre ce qui n'en auroit qu'une fausse empreinte. Votre voix étant étouffée par l'oppression, nous en serions les organes nécessaires, et nous exprimerions nos vrais sentimens, tels qu'ils sont consignés au serment de votre avènement au Trône, tels qu'ils sont constatés par les actions de votre vie entière, tels qu'ils se sont montrés dans la déclaration que vous avez faite au premier moment que vous vous êtes cru libre. Vous ne pouvez pas, vous ne devez pas en avoir d'autres, et votre volonté n'existe que dans les actes où elle respire librement. ”

“ Nous protesterions pour vos peuples, qui



dans leur délire ne peuvent appercevoir combien ce fantôme de constitution nouvelle qu'on fait briller à leurs yeux, et aux pieds duquel on les a fait jurer vainement, leur deviendrait funeste. Lorsque ces peuples, ne connoissant plus ni chef légitime, ni leurs intérêts les plus chers, se laissent entraîner à leur perte ; lorsqu'aveuglés par de trompeuses promesses, ils ne voient pas qu'on les anime à détruire eux-mêmes les gages de leur sûreté, les soutiens de leur repos, les principes de leur subsistance et tous les liens de leur association civile, il faut en réclamer pour eux le rétablissement, il faut les sauver de leur propre frénésie. ”

“ Nous protesterions pour la Religion de nos pères, qui est attaquée dans ses dogmes et dans son culte comme dans ses Ministres ; et suppléant à l'impuissance où vous seriez de remplir vous-même en ce moment vos devoirs de Fils aîné de l'Eglise, nous prendrions en votre nom, la défense de ses droits, nous nous opposerions à des spoliations qui tendent à l'avilir ; nous nous élèverions avec force contre des actes qui menacent le Royaume des horreurs du schisme, et nous professerions hautement notre attachement inaltérable aux règles ecclésiastiques admises dans l'Etat, desquelles vous avez juré de maintenir l'observation. ”

“ Nous protesterions pour les maximes fondamentales de la Monarchie dont il ne vous est



pas permis, Sire, de vous départir ; que la Nation elle-même a déclarées inviolables ; et qui seroient totalement renversées par les décrets qu'on vous présente ; spécialement par ceux qui en excluant le Roi de tout exercice du pouvoir législatif, abolissent la royauté même ; par ceux qui en détruisent tous les soutiens en supprimant tous les rangs intermédiaires ; par ceux qui en nivelant tous les états, anéantissent jusqu'au principe de l'obéissance ; par ceux qui enlèvent au Monarque les fonctions les plus essentielles du gouvernement monarchique, ou qui le rendent subordonné dans celles qu'ils lui laissent ; par ceux enfin, qui ont armé le peuple, qui ont annullé la force publique, et qui, en confondant tous les pouvoirs, ont introduit en France la tyrannie populaire. ”

“ Nous protesterions pour tous les ordres de l'Etat, parce qu'indépendamment de la suppression intolérable et impossible, prononcée contre les deux premiers ordres, tous ont été lésés, vexés, dépouillés ; et nous aurions à réclamer tout à la fois les droits du Clergé qui n'a voulu montrer une ferme et généreuse résistance que pour les intérêts du Ciel et les fonctions du saint ministère ; les droits de la Noblesse, qui, plus sensible aux outrages faits au Trône dont elle est l'appui, qu'à la persécution qu'elle éprouve, sacrifie tout pour manifester par un zèle éclatant, qu'aucun obstacle ne peut empêcher



un Chevalier français de demeurer fidèle à son Roi, à sa patrie, à son honneur ; les droits de la Magistrature, qui regrette, beaucoup plus que la privation de son état, de se voir réduite à gémir en silence de l'abandon de la justice, de l'impunité des crimes, et de la violation des Loix dont elle est essentiellement dépositaire ; enfin les droits des possesseurs quelconques, puisqu'il n'est point en France de propriété qui ait été respectée, point de citoyens honnêtes qui n'aient souffert. ”

“ Comment pourriez-vous, Sire, donner une approbation sincère et valide à la prétendue constitution qui a produit tant de maux ? ”

“ Dépositaire usufruitier du Trône que vous avez hérité de vos ayeux, vous ne pouvez ni en aliéner les droits primordiaux, ni détruire la base constitutive sur laquelle il est assis. ”

“ Défenseur né de la Religion de vos Etats, vous ne pouvez pas consentir à ce qui tend à sa ruine, et abandonner ses ministres à l'opprobre. ”

“ Débiteur de la justice à vos sujets, vous ne pouvez pas renoncer à la fonction essentiellement royale de la leur faire rendre par des tribunaux légalement constitués, et d'en surveiller vous-même l'administration. ”

“ Protecteur des droits de tous les Ordres, et des possessions de tous les particuliers, vous ne pouvez pas les laisser violer, et anéantir par la plus arbitraire des oppressions. ”



“ Enfin père de vos peuples, vous ne pouvez pas les livrer au désordre et à l'anarchie. ”

“ Si le crime qui vous obsède, et la violence qui vous lie les mains, ne vous permettent pas de remplir ces devoirs sacrés, ils n'en sont pas moins gravés dans votre cœur en traits ineffaçables, et nous accomplirions votre volonté réelle, en suppléant autant qu'il est en nous, à l'impossibilité où vous seriez de l'exercer. ”

“ Dussiez-vous même nous le défendre, et fussiez-vous forcé de vous dire libre en nous le défendant ; ces défenses, évidemment contraires à vos sentimens, puisqu'elles le seroient au premier de vos devoirs ; ces défenses, sorties du sein de votre captivité, qui ne cessera réellement que quand vos peuples seront rentrés dans le devoir, et vos troupes sous votre obéissance, ces défenses, qui ne pourroient avoir plus de valeur que tout ce que vous aviez fait avant votre sortie, et que vous avez désavoué ensuite ; ces défenses enfin, qui seroient imprégnées de la même nullité que l'acte approbatif contre lequel nous serions obligés de protester, ne pourroient certainement pas nous faire trahir notre devoir, sacrifier vos intérêts, et manquer à ce que la France auroit droit d'exiger de nous en pareille circonstance. Nous obéirions, Sire, à vos véritables commandemens, en résistant à des défenses extorquées, et nous serions sûrs de votre approbation, en suivant les loix de l'honneur.



Notre parfaite soumission vous est trop connue pour que jamais elle vous paroisse douteuse. Puissions-nous être bientôt au moment heureux où, rétabli en pleine liberté, vous nous verrez voler dans vos bras, y renouveler l'hommage de notre obéissance, et en donner l'exemple à tous vos sujets! ”

“ Nous sommes, Sire, notre Frère et Seigneur, de votre Majesté,”

Les très-humbles et très-obéissans  
Frères, Serviteurs et Sujets,

LOUIS-STANISLAS-XAVIER,  
CHARLES-PHILIPPE;

*Au Château de Schonburnstust, près Coblentz, le 10 Septembre  
1791.*

F I N.





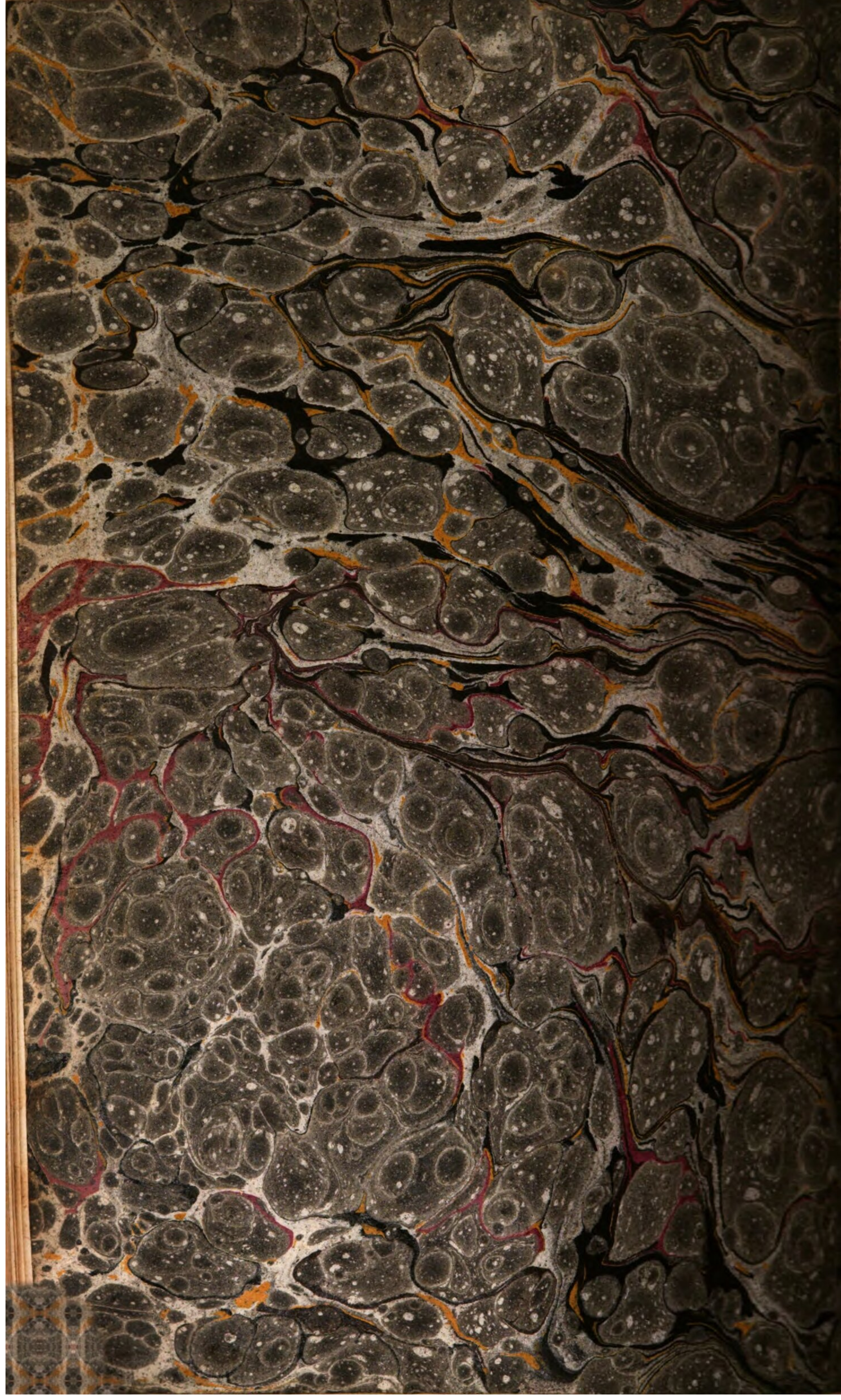




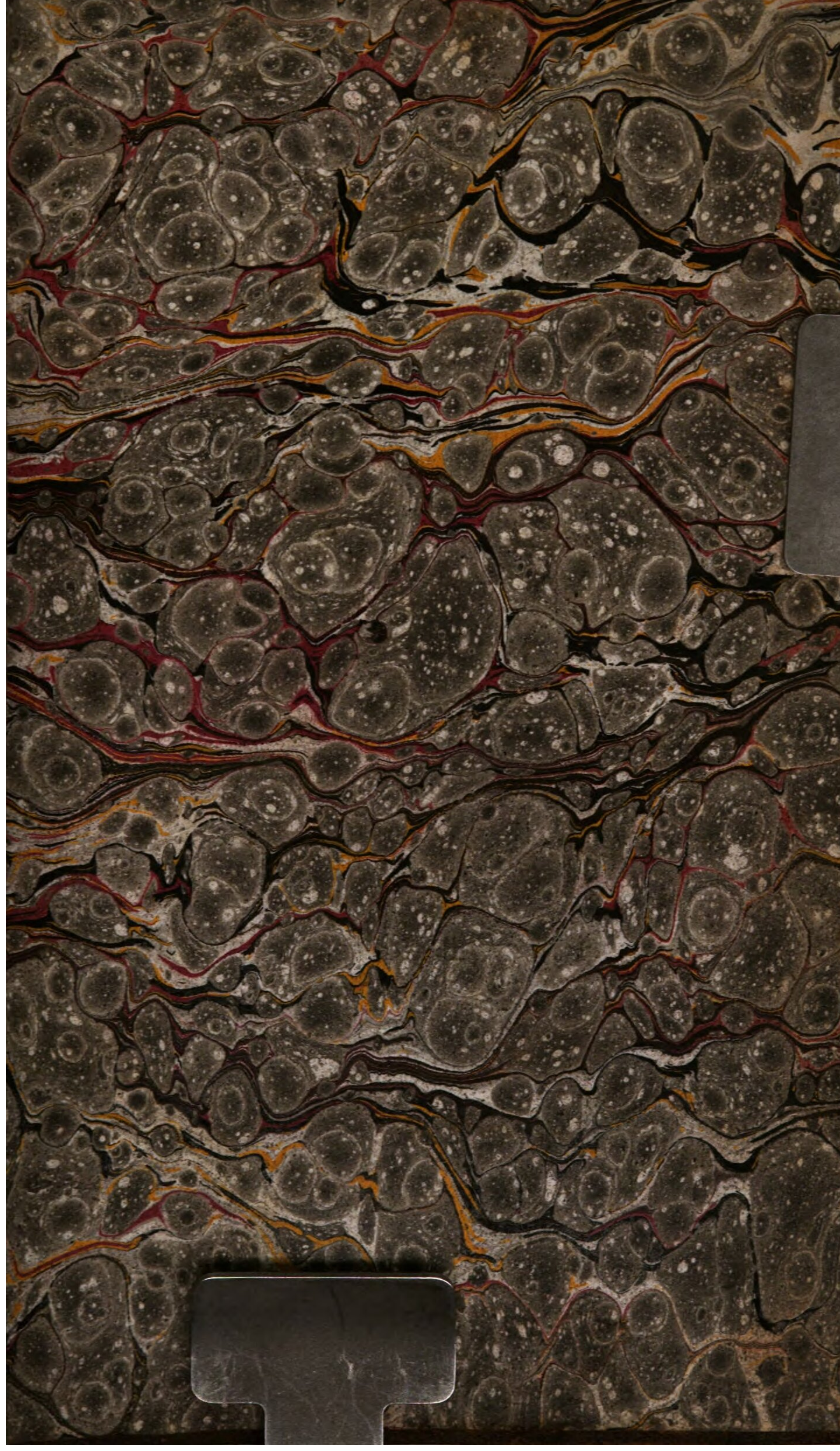


















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